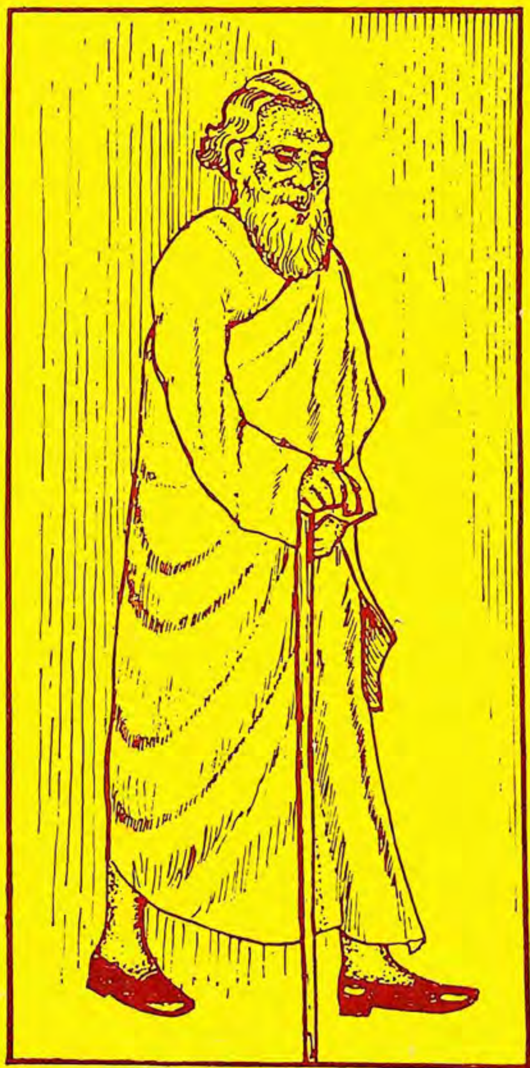
UTKALA GURU PANDIT NILAKANTHA



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PANDIT NILAKANTHA

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BHUBANESWAR
(Orissa)

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FORWARD

This book UTKAL GURU PANDIT NILAKANTHA is our second publication in English, meant for the School going children of English medium Schools. "PANDIT NILAKANTHA DAS : LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS" written by Mrs. Lila Roy was published during the Birth Centenary of Pt. Nilakantha in 1985.

A revised and enlarged version of MANISHI NILAKANTHA," in Oriya, written by Pandit Narasingh Mohapatra in 1959,was published in 1984 by this Samiti. But a biography in English for the boys and girls, reading in English Medium School was wanting. Fortunately, a proposal came from Dr. Kishore Chandra Padhy of Jeypore (Koraput, Orissa) a great admirer of Pandit Nilakantha, who submitted this book for publication. As the readers may find from the book, Pandit Nilakantha was very much responsible for the amalgamation of Ganjam and Koraput Districts, then under the Madras Presidency to Orissa. Pandit Das has been acclaimed as "the veritable father of Orissa". We therefore gladly accepted the manuscript of Dr. Padhy and agreed for its publication. Professor Sarbeswar Das, a nephew of Panditji agreed to edit the manuscript with great enthusiasm.

We express our grateful thanks to both of them.

There have been some delay in its publication, but all the same, we are happy that all factual information regarding Pandit Nilakantha available till now have been

incorporated in this book. Special efforts have been made to indicate in detail Panditji's contributions to the last phase of struggle for the country's independence. At that time he was misunderstood for that work. Pandit Nilakantha however had explained his stand very emphatically in joining Sri Subhash Chandra Bose and the Forward Block. This vision of Pandit Nilakantha, it would appear, has helped in the process of the transfer of Power to India by the Britishers. In this connection it may be interesting to note that Pandit Das in a speech in the Orissa Legislative Assembly held Nehruji responsible for the partition of India in unequivocal terms. This has been recently corroborated through the last 30 pages of Moulana Abul Kalam Azad's book, 'India attains freedom', supported b y Sri Minoo Masanis comments.

We shall however feel our efforts fruitful if the publication is appreciated by the student community and the people at large.

NITYANANDA MOHAPATRA
Vice-President

MADHUSUDAN DAS
Secretary

DEDICATION TO SARDAR SANTOK SINGH

SARDAR SANTOK SINGH was one of the earliest Life Members, later a Patron of this Smruti Samiti. We feel duty bound to dedicate this volume to our Sardar Santok, who expressed a wish that this small volume 'UTKAL GURU PANDIT NILAKANTHA' be published soon for the benefit of the Non-Oriya lovers of Pt. Nilakantha. We are sorry that he is no longer with us to see the publication.

The first publication of the Samiti was dedicated to Pt. Nilakantha's wife Smt. Radhamani Devi, and we are happy that this dedication is to one eminent Non-Oriya enterpreneurs, born in Burma, who later choose Orissa as his place of work and loved Pt. Nilakantha so much.

Sardar Santok Singh was born at Kutkai, Northern Shan State, Burma on 5.10.1921. In the early part of his life, he joined the family business at Rangoon and then started a retailing business in cloth at Lyllapur (now in Pakisthan). He was then back to Burma in 1946. After independence, when the construction of the giant Hirakud Dam Project was taken up, Santok Singh went there and got very much involved in its construction and later, when the Capital Construction started in 1948, he shifted to Bhubaneswar and took up construction of Roads in the Capital and outside in Orissa as also construction of Bridges with the help of his eldest son, Mr. Balbir Singh, a Civil Engineer .ı 12.

He made Bhubaneswar his home and settled here. He soon endeared all the intelligentia and the Technocrats and got associated with many of the cultural organisations at Bhubaneswar.

Mr. Santok Singh, was for a long time, President of the Orissa Contractors' Association and Chairman of the Bhubaneswar Centre of Builders Association of India. He was also Vice-President of Orissa Engineering Congress and Founder President of Bhubaneswar Music Circle. As President of the Gurudwar Singh Sabha, Bhubaneswar and Orissa Sikh Pratinidhi Board, Santok Singh commanded respect and love of all communities. He was a Rotarian and Vice-President and involved in all community services too.

He passed away at Houston, Texas, U.S.A. after a second by-pass heart Surgery on 28th October 1988.

Mr. Singh has left behind his wife, three sons and two daughters alongwith innumerable relatives and friends like us to mourn his loss.

May his Soul rest in peace.

—X—

INTRODUCTION

Pandit Nilakantha Das :
The Veritable Father of Orissa

The men he loved and workers he took with him in the last phase of the struggle for independence of the country decorated Pandit Nilakantha with the title 'UTKALAGURU' i.e teacher or Inspirer of Orissa. Acharya P. C. Ray had named Pandit Gopabandhu, the father of the Indian National Congress in Orissa as "UTKALAMANI" i.e. the gem of Orissa. Madhusudan Das, the uncrowned king of Orissa was popularly known as "UTKALA GOURABA", the glory of Orissa, Pandit Nilakantha, a close colleague of the former and a follower of the latter joined them as 'UTKALAGURU". Utkal Gourava congratulated Utkalamani for having founded the then Vana Vidyalaya, an open air grove School at Satyabadi on the lines of ancient Gurukula System. His words were, "Gopabandhu, you have built a Nalanda". (Nalanda was a famous Buddhist Centre of learning in Magadha, the present day Bihar.) Gopabandhu immediately replied, "Not I, but Nilakantha." Fakir Mohan, the Vyasa Kabi of Orissa commended Nilakantha for his knowledge and piety

and described him as Bhagiratha, who had been born to save the clan (in this case, the State of of Orissa). Utkalamani Gopabandhu later said, "There is no Pandit in the country, who does not know Pt. Nilakantha", whereas the renowned Bhoodan leader Vinova Bhave passed a remark, "I have toured the whole of India, but have not come across a Pandit like Pt. Nilakantha Das".

Utkala Gouraba like Gopabandhu, watched every work of Nilakantha and in 1934 said to his followers in his death-bed, "After me, Nilakantha will remain to carry on every thing for Orissa. You should all cooperate with him. How his followers obeyed the words of Utkala Gouraba in the matter of cooperating with Nilakantha is not to be discussed here. The fact however, remains that Orissa became a separate province after the death of Utkala Gourab in 1936 and the Andhra Patriot, 87-year old Professor N. G. Ranga, M.P. and the Deputy Leader of the Congress (I) Party in the Lok Sabha, while scanning the achievements of Pt. Nilakantha the other day on 11.4.87 at Rourkela described him as "the Veritable Father of Orissa State". We may describe in detail Panditji's contribution to the formulation of the State, as also to the India's freedom movement particularly in the last phase of the struggle at the ripe of his life in later chapters.

Morning Shows the Day :

Nilakantha, later popularly known as Pandit Nilakantha was born on the eve of "Gamha Purnima" or the birthday of Balabhadra i.e. on the 5th August 1884, filling with joy the hearts of his parents Sri Ananda Das and Smt. Hira Devi of village Sri Rama Chandrapur in Satyabadi Police Station of Puri District. It is situated in an area of dense coconut groves, not far from the famous Sakhigopal Temple. A rivulet 'Ratna-Chira' is flowing by the side of the village to meet the river Bhargavi that falls into the Chilka lake, a few miles away.

Nilakantha derived his name from the deity Balia Nilakantha, whose temple is located about 10 miles off (as the crow flies) from this village. Nilakantha's parents were in misery, as out of their seven children including a son, only three daughters had survived. Craving intently for a son, they started worshipping the Lord and visited the temple every day before taking their food. As a small channel had to be crossed, the old lady had to remain on fasting at home during rainy days till her husband came back with the Bela-leaf and prasad of the Deity. Nilakantha was born after about 5 years of such arduous worship and penance. It is also a matter of interest to know that Utkal Guru Pandit Nilakantha rightly deserved this name as he had to swallow a

lot of poison in the form of baseless recrimination and enemity and encountered a lot of troubles and intrigues during his life time. He however, remained firm and unshaken in serving the country.

Nilakantha was extraordinarily talented from his very childhood. This was well noticed by his primary school teacher. Nilakantha's School mates, out of malice did not help him. The village school teacher told them. "You are not helping him now, but when Nilakantha would grow up, none of you will qualify even to carry his luggage." The prophecy of this obscure school teacher in later years came to be true as we may notice in due course

There were very few High Schools in Orissa in those days, Nilakantha walked about 15 miles to Puri for his study. Fortunately, he got a Primary School scholarship which enabled him to continue his studies there. Otherwise, it might not have been possible for his father to bear the expenses.

In 1902, he came in intimate contact with an illustrious group of social workers brought together by Sri Gopabandhu Das. These young men felt extremely sad at the situation prevailing then in Orissa and Nilakantha with Gopabandhu, Harihar and Ananta took the vow, after a whole night discussions on the bed of the river Bhargavi. "We will not enter into Government service We

will work for the country and see it better before our death than what it is now."

Service to Man & the Society :

Nilakantha's spirit of service to man was evident from his student days. As a school student, he served cholera patients with patience and diligence. On one occasion, at Cuttack, he went out straight to treat a cholera case without waiting for the permision of the Hostel Superintendent, who lodged a complaint with the Principal. The Principal called Nilakantha and asked him to explain why he went without permission. Nilakantha explained, "The gravity of the situation required immediate attention. There was nobody to look after the patient, who is having frequent loose motions and demands water every now and then. In the circumstances, I should not be detained any longer to explain, but should be allowed to go to the patient. In case, I am considered guilty, I may please be punished." The Principal Sri B. V. Gupta had a close look at Nilakantha. He apreciated Nilakantha's sincere desire to serve mankind and left it at that.

During the floods of 1907, Nilakantha left the College to assist Gopabandhu in the relief work in Jajpur and Kendrapara Sub-division's of Cuttack District. The then British Collector of Cuttack did not like this and brought it to the notice of the Principal. The Principal, in turn, asked Nilakantha,

to explain why he had gone without obtaining permission. Nilakantha without batting an eyelid replied that he had gone to Kendrapara along with Gopabandhu on flood relief work and had sent a post card letter to that effect. The Principal rudely querried. "Is that the way of obtaining permission ? You are under our care. In case you had fallen sick or met with an accident, what explanation could we have to offer to your parents ?" Nilakantha gravely replied, "I went to help the dying people. It was urgent. There was no time to inform" The Principal commented, "Whether you had time or no to inform us is not our concern." Thereupon, Nilakantha quipped. "The elders always think and say like this and the youth do what I did. I did not do any thing sinful." The Principal got extremely pleased at this answer and laughed, because he knew Nilakantha and his sincere spirit of service to society.

In later days when Nilakantha was relieved of the charge of the Headmastership of Satyabadi school, a great famine occurred at Davar in Puri District. Nilakantha remained in-charge of relief at the site for a period of about six months and was feeding the distressed in the area, a unique thing then. Gopabandhu was then a Member of Bihar and Orissa Council. He brought the matter in the Council and got the Lieutenant Governor, Mr. Gruin

to visit the area. There was very poor transport facilities then. One had to go by bullock cart to such places. Nilakantha made all arrangements during the visit of Mr. Gruin to enable him to have a clear view of the said famine and Mr. Gruin candidly admitted, "What ought to have been done, has not been done."

Satyabadi Vana Vidyalaya :

Its Opening

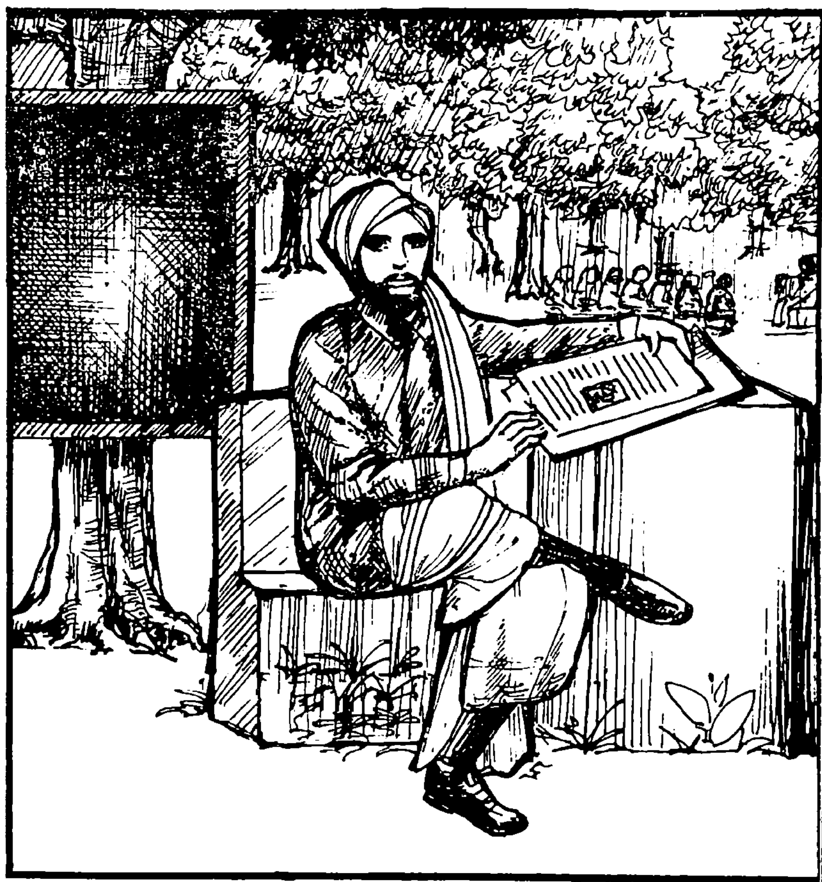
: When Niiakantha graduated, observing the vow he had taken, he along with Gopabandhu, wanted to establish a model school. They searched for a suitable site throughout Orissa. "Why not Satyabadi village ?" Madhusudan Rao (1853-1912), the great Oriya poet suggested to Gopabandhu. The school of their dream was established in the village site behind the Sakhigopal temple with its beautiful surroundings of Bakul grove. Gopabandhu and Nilakantha started a modest construction to house the school in this grove. Nilakantha, after the opening ceremony of the school in 1909 went to Calcutta to study M.A. in order to qualify himself to be its Headmaster. He came back straight to head the school after two years of post Graduate study in Calcutta.

Nilakantha Joins as Headmaster

Nilakantha joined the Vana Vidyalaya on the 11th October, 1911 when it was of M.E. standard. He soon brought this to High School standard and was its Headmaster for over seven years. He used to teach almost all the subjects in the top classes, including English, English Translation, Mathematics, History and odd subjects like Model Drawing, Botany, Oriya Grammer etc. He also taught subjects, which other teachers could not take up satisfactorily. That was the exact reason for which Nilakantha had to go for M.A. studies in Calcutta, graduation being otherwise sufficient.

Its Aims and Practices

Nilakantha did not think of the school to be in line of the usual schools. Both his mentor Gopabandhu and he planned it to be a proto-type of Harrow in England or Fergusson College of Poona. They formed the Universal Education League. Nilakantha joined as a Working member and became both the Headmaster of the school and the Superintendent of the Hostel. He was getting a remuneration of Rs. 30/- (Rupees thirty) only per month, the payment to teachers being need-based. It was simple living and high thinking in practice. Satyabadi schools was a society in itself. It was a cooperative



Nilakantha the Headmaster of Vana Vidyalaya

enterprise of the teachers and the students, sharing life, while learning and working together. The teachers and the students built the school bricks by brick, carrying the construction materials on their heads. Everybody ate the same food at the same time and all lived together like members of one family. The teachers not only taught lessons, but also worked for the all-round development of the students. Sri Chandrasekhar Mishra, a student of the school has described the life style in Satyabadi School in great detail and in glowing terms in his "Satyabadire Sata Barsha". No wonder that every product of Satyabadi was proud of his almamater in the days to come and many of them turned as Jewels.

Library System Newly Introduced

For the benefit of the students, Nilakantha introduced a Class Library System, besides building a valuable School Library for which very costly books and even rare foreign publications were brought.

Each class Library was furnished with books befitting the students of that particular class. The boys were asked to maintain their own 'Note Books' in which all relevant informations available in the Book had to be kept. In case they could not give

satisfactory answers to the questions of the teacher while returning the books, the books were again issued for another term of 10 days to help the students to grasp the subjects and prepare adequate notes.

Gardening, Messing & Other Activities

Besides attending to normal curriculum, the students were asked to do gardening which also helped in their messing. The Boarders were in-charge of the mess under the supervision of the Superintendent of the Hostel and were collecting and purchasing the food stuffs themselves from the market. Mass Drills were held regularly. Moral Instructions were imparted in all the classes and even outsiders were invited to impart such instructions to the entire body of the school students. Persons of the calibre of Mr. M. S. Das, Advocate, Vyasakabi Fakir Mohan Senapati, Sri Janaki Nath Bose, Advocate and Professors of Colleges were some of the reputed persons who addressad the students. Besides, occasionally eminent ex-professors of Calcutta visited the Institution and gave insterting talks.

Strict Discipline

Nilakantha was very strict in maintaining discipline and Punctuality. It is said that he would

get into the class at the stroke of the bell, sometimes even without wearing a coat or a shirt. Once, he noticed his own teacher of earlier times dozing in the class. Without telling any thing to the teacher, who used to cover about a mile on foot to reach the school in time after food, he asked the Peon to take out the chair meant for the teachers and put a stool in place the next day. The old teacher however, understood and appreciated the intention of the Headmaster, Nilakantha.

On another occasion, he noticed the English teacher, telling in the class that words ending with '1y' would be taken as Adverbs and was faced with awkward questions by the students in this context regarding words like 'Italy' and 'Cicily' Nilakantha cooly asked the teacher to seek another job and leave the school.

Social Services

Apart from imparting instructions on the prescribed course of studies, the school also used to render a lot of social service in the area. At that time, Cholera used to break out very often in an epidemic form, particularly at the time of Ratha Jatra or Car–festival of Lord Sri Jagannatha. The school used to send a well-trained team of

students to Puri and its Headmaster Pandit Nilakantha in the Company of the students, worked hard in the service of the patients.

Pt. Das was a voracious reader and used to read till late hours at night. Lest persons coming to report cholera cases be not able to find the Headmaster quickly, if he would be inside a room, Pandit Nilakantha used to read at the verandah and sleep also there itself keeping the lantern on.

It is also said that Pandit Das, at one time treated 22 such cases in his own village with Hemoeopathic Medicine and in cases, where it was not convenient to prepare food at patients' homes, he used to get barley prepared at his own home and serve them.

School & Its Headmaster Against Superstitions— Had To Pay Its Price

Satyabadi School was not a school in the traditional sense. It was a school that worked against age-old superstitions and wrong beliefs. Pandit Nilakantha allowed the Harijan Students to study in the School and stay in the hostel. They were also served food along with the Caste Hindu Brahmin boarders sitting in the same batch. Its importance cannot be gauged now in the late '80s.

In the '20s of the century, this was considered a sacrilege for which Satyabadi school had to pay the price. The conservative Brahmins burnt down the school and along with it, the valuable school library.

Moustache Movement

Keeping moustache by Brahmins was considered a crime in those days. Nilakantha was a pioneer of the "Moustache Movement". He wrote an article on Moustache entitled "MO NISHA" (my moustache) in an Oriya magazine, The Mukur and pointed out that there was no bar in the Hindu Law for the Brahmins to keep moustaches. He also practised what he wrote. Till then, the Brahmins never maintained moustaches. They got very much enraged on this. The Muktimandap Pandit Sabha of the Jagannath Temple at Puri, the representative body of the learned Brahmins and an authoritative association, giving decisions on the tradition and norms of the Society, particularly of the Brahmin Society passed a resolution to the effect that persons keeping moustache like Pandit Nilakantha and his followers engaged in social reforms would be excommunicated. They even attacked his old father asking him to choose between his son and the Brahmin Community, while he was participating in a community dinner at late-hours of the night at one of his relative's place, about 10 miles from his home.

It is said that the Prime Architect of the famous Sun Temple at Konarka was a teen-aged boy Dharama, who alone could place the apex stone of the Konarka Temple which eluded twelve hundred sculptors. The sculptors, instead of patronising him, asked his father, "What do you want, your young son or the twelve hundred sculptors ?" The father of the boy, much against his will, chose the latter & Dharama jumped into the sea. But Pandit Nilakantha's father was made up of sterner stuff. He supported Nilakantha's efforts against Social evils. He now, opted for his son and declared "My son has foresight. Whatever he is doing in respect of social renaissance, is for your benefit and for the welfare of the society." The oldman of 80 had then to leave the community dinner with this prophetic statement and came back home walking all the 10 miles in that dark night without any food. Pandit Gopabandhu also fought against Muktimandapa Pandit Sabha's decision later and wrote articles in the Mukur, the famous Magazine of Orissa of the time under the pseudonym name of Sri Dharmananda Sharma. He cited the cases of a few selected Brahmins who held high positions in Orissa and protested against discriminatory treatment meted out to Pandit Nilakantha.

It may also be noted here that Pandit Nilakantha also opposed expensive thread ceremony. He celebrated the Sacred Thread Ceremony of his second son very economically. When one of his friends told his son in joke, "Your father has cheated you" (Meaning that your Thread Ceremony was not celebrated with due pomp and grandeur), he defended his father and said that the thread ceremony had its significance in ancient India, when Gurukula System was in voguee. Now the Brahmins read in schools and colleges with the students of all castes, even of scheduled castes and Mahomedans. So my father, a social reformer wanted that it should not be celebrated with any pomp. Besides Brahmins are seldom doing the jobs prescribed for the caste.

Nilakantha Fights 'Vira-Pesha' and 'Kaleshi'

Superstitious beliefs in Ghosts and Vira-Pesha i. e. shorting of mischieousn spirits to afflict persons known as introduction of Vira and actings of Kaleshi were fought against tooth and nail by Nilakantha. Such Vira Pesha was usually noticed in families of young ladies married to old persons, who do not like to stay with their husbands. Very uncommon happenings like flinging of night soil or bones of animals etc. from outside were found in

the houses of the families of such ladies and neither the cause nor the source of such happenings could seldom be detected.

Such an incident occurred once in a house at Pandit Nilakantha's village, when he was in the village. Panditji had to spend a full day to find out how such a thing was happening. Being unable to find the clue, he managed to send away the lady to her village and the happening stopped. With the growth of knowledge and civilisation, the incidents gradually disappeared.

Similarly Panditji tried to stop the working of 'KALESHI'. Whenever there would be an outbreak of cholera epidemics, villagers would worship the Goddesses of various descriptions with great pomp and arranged grand feasts at their temples. Besides, one of the villagers had to act as if the Goddess had got into his body and then set out in the village in a procession with beating of drums and blowing of buggles and would make various abnormal demands. On one such occasion in his village, Pandit Nilakantha and the teacher of his childhood who were talking outside in the verandah, could hear such a happening and went to the Kaleshi who was demanding goats and various sweet drinks. He was also threatening that otherwise he would devour 150 persons of the village. Pandit Nilakantha went

straight to him and suddenly gave him a thrash from behind which made him fall down. His old teacher also assisted him by taking the canes out of the hands of the 'Kaleshi' and caned him heavily till he was unconscious. The villagers present exclaimed that the Goddess would be very angry and devour both of them by the sun-rise. Nothing however happened to Nilakantha, his teacher norte any of the villagers. Nilakantha later asked the Mali (Priest of the Goddess) about the superstition and the Mali confessed that such shows are put up by him out of poverty. The system disappeared since then from the locality and from Orissa gradually. Whenever such an incident would occur in any neighbouring village, it was interesting to note that the school children would shout "Nilakantha Babu is on his way" and the people pretending to be Kaleshis would immediately run away. Thus, Panditji fought single handed against various social evils and superstitions. Needless to say that he was not merely a teacher of the school boys in the norrow sense of the term. He was a teacher of mankind in a more general and broader sense.

Satyabadi, The Centre Of Culture.

Soon after Nilakantha joined as the Headmaster of the school, Satyabadi turned out to be a Centre of Cultural activities.

Besides bringing the Vana Vidyalaya to the standard of a High School, Nilakantha also imparted training to the students as per the curriculum and carried on extra-curricular activities, like study tours by foot and bullock carts to historically important places like Nilamadhaba, the original seat of Lord Jagannath and Konarka, the famous Sun-temple of Orissa and other places (transport facilities being not available at that time)

A cultural monthly Magazine "Satyabadi" was brought out under the editorship of Nilakantha in the name of the Secretary of the school with writings from Gopabandhu and other teachers as also from the students. The famous 'SAMAJ' (now a daily newspaper) was also started from here as a weekly Earlier to this, Gopabandhu was writing the editorials and both Nilakantha and Godabarisha were writing various articles and weekly comments in the 'ASHA', a weekly published from Berhampur under the editorships of Shri S B Rath one of the fathers of Oriya Movement in the South.

Remarks Of Big Personal ities.

Utkal Gourab Madhusudan paid the highest tribute to Satyabadi School by terming it as a replica of 'Nalanda'. Edward Gait, the then

Lieutenant Governor of Bihar and Orissa, during his visit to the school, wrote, "I am also greatly impressed by the system of teaching in the open air instead of the crowded class-rooms".

Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee, the great educationist and the Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University who invited Nilakantha to join his University as Professor in Oriya-cum-Contemporary Philology paid glowing tributes to the school in the following words —

"I have visited the Satyabadi School with great interest. The school possesses many remarkable features. It is managed by a group of well educated Oriyas, who have realised the real truth that spread of education among the people can be effected on the surest and soundest lines by persons who are prepared to make great sacrifice. It is obvious to me that the school is backed by more than one such devoted and enthusiastic youngman They have further realised that true education is however, possible without expensive and luxurious equipments.

Indeed, such equipments are a hindrance than on aissistance to the cause of spread of education among an essentiality poor class of people, one cannot but wish that every village in Bengal should possess a genuine plan of education in line with the Satyabadi School".

School Receives National Acclaim Inspite Of Govt. Suspicion.

The school inspite of the reputation for its academic performance, discipline and commendable social activities, did not get official recognition for a long time, as it was wrongly suspected by the Govt. to be a hide out of the terrorists.

The district Collector however, after a spot visit reported the suspicion to be totally baseless. An interesting thing in this connection happened. The District Collector during the unscheduled visit asked the Headmaster, Nilakantha Das, "Are you manufacturing Bombs here ?" Nilakantha after a little pause, replied emphatically, "Yes, we are manufacturing bombs, but they are life bombs,which will blast in course of time. They are not bombs in the usual sense of the term". The Collector could understand what it meant.

In fact, the school achieved highest national acclaim for some time. After the burning of the thatched houses along with the Library of the school by the miscreants, a pucca building was erected in no time. Panditji's "Mustache Movement" was crowned with great success. Satyabadi worked as a Centre of great culture. In fact, Satyabadi Yuga or Satyabadi Age in Oriya literature was from 1909 to 1921.

Decline Of Satyabadi :

Satyabadi was however destined to decline like all things in the world. True, there was some sort of dissensions amongst the teachers and the staff. But things took a serious turn after Pandit Nilakantha left the school, Pt. Godavarish Mishra who became the Headmaster, was sent by Gopabandhu to Singhbhum only after 4 months to organise the Oriya Movement there. Pandit Mishra handed over the charge to Pt. Krupasindhu Mishra another M.A. teacher. At this point of time, again the country was in great turmoil due to Gandhiji's Satyagraha Movement. Attention being diverted to fight for Independence of the country, the school had to finally lose its identity particularly after the death of Pt. Krupasindhu Mishra in 1926.

Nilakantha, Professor of Calcutta University :

When Sir Ashutash visited Satyabadi School, as has been stated earlier, he was extremely pleased at the good administrative capacity and the depth of knowledge of Nilakantha and expressed a wish to take him to his University. Again, when Nilakantha was in Calcutta in early 1920 to publish the Famine Report of Devar in Puri District, he requested Nilakantha to come and join as Professor of Oriya-cum-Comparative Philology there. But Satyabadi School being the

Central field of activity of his Life, Nilakantha was at a fix and wanted to obtain necessary advice from Gopabandhu. On Gopabandhu's advice, Nilakantha left for Calcutta with the understanding that he would come back to Satyabadi after 2 years after training another person to take charge there. He took a B.A. student with him and left Satyabadi on the 20th September, 1920 and joined the University the next day.

Nilakantha was perhaps ordained to serve the country still better to fulfil his vow. As a writer, he had already made a name. As the Professor in the teaching line, he would have turned out to be a much greater literateur in the country or in the world. Within the short period of three & half months, not only he proved himself a great scholar, but also became extremely popular and well known as a great literateur both in the University and outside the city of Calcutta. When he left the University to join the Non-Co-operation movement, started by Gandhiji, one of his collegues, Professor Ramesh Chandra Mazumdar of History shed tears like a child and exclaimed, "Nilakantha, how is it that you are able to give up the attachment of such a vast organisation ?"

CHAPTER- II

A Fighter Par Excellence : A Pillar Of The Congress

Nilakantha, the fighter joins the Congress :

Pandit Nilakantha was not only a fighter against illiteracy, a crusader against social evils and superstitions, but also a great fighter for freedom. We have seen how he had taken an oath on the bank of the river Bhargavi to serve the country along with Gopabandhu. While still a student of the High School, he took the pledge in the meeting presided over by Sri Madhu Sudan Das at Puri to boycott foreign goods and use Swadeshi amidst great applause and he was the first to sign this in a Register produced by Mr. Das amongst thousands attending the meeting, without caring for the heavy contingent of red-turbaned Police Force. This dare-devilness cannot be understood at the present time after Independence. In those days, people got terrified when a policeman went to the area. Nilakantha was associated with the young Utkal Association from 1903 and assisted Gopabandhu in all his works during the Satyabadi days.

When the clarion call of Mahatma Gandhi to start the non-cooperation movement for attainment

of Swarajya came at the Nagpur Congress at the end of December, 1920, it was no wonder that Nilakantha could not resist it and immediately left the lucrative job of Profess orship of the Calcutta University along with the decent living of the great city and plunged himself in to the freedom fight. This was only after three & half months of his joining the post against a contract of 2 years. He called Gopabandhu from Satyabadi by telegram and left for Sambalpur along with him and a Sambalpur Law Student, Sri Bhagirathi Mishra by the evening train on the 6th January, 1921 and started Satyagraha there the next day, His slogan in Hindi-mixed Oriya was

"ସ୍ୱଗଜ ଭୟା ଅଲ୍‌ବତ୍ ହୋଗା
ଛୋଡ୍‌କେ ଆଓ ଗୋଲମି
ଭରତ ଲଡ୍‌କା ହୋକେ ବାବୁ
କାହେ କରେ ବଦ୍‌ନାମି ?

(Swaraja or self-rule will definitely be attained. So you Indians, should cast off slavery is service to the British Raj and join the freedom struggle. Being sons of India why earn a bad name ?)

It took no time for Nilakantha to induce the student mass, the teachers, the Govt.servants and also the public at large to join the movement. He

became extremely popular also by taking up social work, like treating the sick, particularly the Cholera patients at Sambalpur and adjoining villages. He also established a National School there.

Mahatma Gandhi's Visit to Satyabadi

When the great freedom movement started, Mahatma Gandhi made a visit to Satyabadi in September, 1921. Pandit Nilakantha was asked to come from Sambalpur and meet Mahatmaji. The grove school was in its lean days and was turned to a National College. Nilakantha had a long talk with Gandhiji. He tried to explain to Gandhiji that Swaraj could not be attained by spinning. All the same, that was to be done, he said, to have unity in the country and as disciplined members of the Great Organisation. they themselves would also spin. On his return from Satyabadi, Mahatma Gandhi gave the following openion about the Satyabadi School :

"It is a serious experiment to Open Air Teaching.. ... ... It is worthy of a visit. I am confident that with workers as selfless as Gopabandhu and his Associates, it would not be surprising if the country achieves Swaraj within the year". He praised the austere living and the frugality of the diet of the

inmates. But he prophetically added. "There is a limit to what a man can sacrifice. The workers of this calibre have to be supported by common people, Self-reliance is stressed through the development of skills. Spinning provides income, but greater investment is required for young students to be properly trained and the aim of the school achieved in practice "

Nilakantha continued as a lecturer in Oriya in this National College, taking part at the same time, in the Non cooperation Movement and calling meetings to boycott British Goods. He was consequently imprisoned in 1923 for four and half months

Nilakantha Joins Swaraj Party

At this point, when Nilakantha was still in jail, there was a great chaos in the Congress Organisation due to differences amongst its top leaders. Stalwarts like Sri Chittaranjan Das, Pandit Motilal Nehru and others, who came forward to plead that Swaraj would not be attained by Non-cooperation Movement and the provisions of the Constitution, which had provided for the Indians to represent in the Central Legislative Assembly had to be availed of, Nilakantha had the very same openion. He consulted Pt. Gopabandhu in jail and after his

release, joined the Swaraja Party (inside the Congress). They were called "Pro-changers" and the Party which remained with Mahatmaji was called "No-Changers".

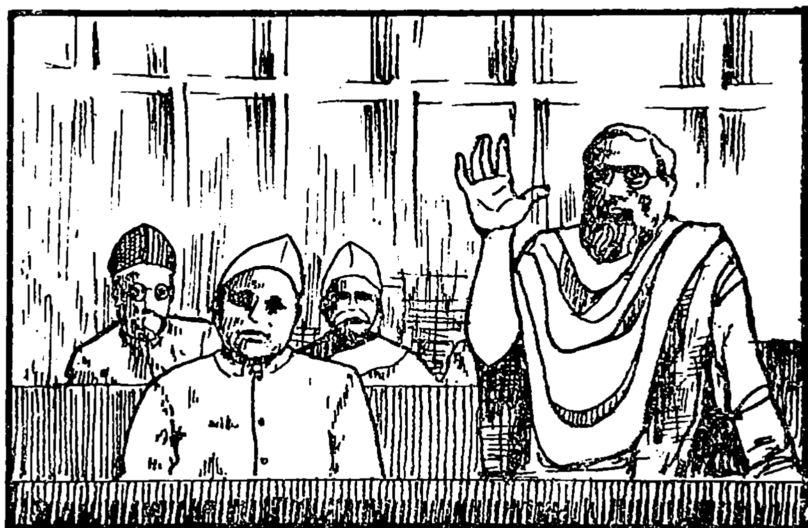
Pandit Nilakantha In The Central Legislature

Pt. Nilakantha then fought the election from the non-Mohammedan Constituency of Orissa and having been elected, joined the Central Legislative Assembly on 30. 1. 1924. He was one of the two Professors in the Assembly with Pt. Malavyaji. He also became the Senior Secretary of the Swaraj (Congress) Party with Pandit Motilal Nehru as the President and Sri Rangamachary and others as Secretaries. Within a short period, Pandit Nilakantha became a very prominant member in the Assembly.

An interesting incident, narrated by the Orissa Governor, Sri B. N. Pandey in this connection, while inaugurating the statue of Pt. Nilakantha at his village in Satyabadi on 30.3 88, is worth mentioning, He said, on one occasion, I was in the visitors' gallery in the Central Assembly, when Panditji was speaking. One of the visitors sitting by my side, asked another near him, "Who is the Speaker speaking so eloquently & emphaticalty. The other replied, "Well you don't know ? He is

Pandit Nilakantha Das, the Orissa Lion. The Orissa Lion is roaring." This indicates how Panditji was a powerful Legislator and was fighting for the cause, he stood for.

Nilakantha had two aims in entering the Legislature. First, to point out the failures of the British Administration and achieve more power for the Legislature and second, no less important, to obtain the Statehood for Orissa. From the beginning, Pt. Das became conspicuous when he asked the Govt. to state as to what action had been taken against the oppression of the political prisoners in jails. He also raised various questions on Railway Budget, purchase of Railway stores, purchase of Railway sleepers from Indian Firms, appointment of Oriyas in the Railways, atrocities of the Oriya labourers in the tea gardens in Assam, etc. Pt. Das also advocated the cause of the children of the Railway employees and demanded for providing an adequate number of Indian representatives on the Royal Commission in the Federation of Keniyan and other East and Central African Colonies. He objected strongly to sending Indian Troops to be used for the war in Abyssinia. For protecting the Indians there, not doubt, he said, a small contingent of soldiers might be sent, Pt. Nilakantha also fought for the remission of Salt Tax, as that affected the



Pt. Nilakantha speaking at the Central Legislature at Simla Session, 1936. By his side Sri Ananta Sayanam Ayengar and in the rear Sri Rabisankar Sukla and Pt. G. B. Panth (behind)

poor people the most and pressed for reviving the Salt Manufacture in Orissa and its free trade in 1925 and this, we may note, he did 5 years before Mahatma Gandhi's Dandi March in 1930.

Pt. Das proved himself to be very progressive when he opposed the Public Safety Bill of the Govt. against instrusion of Communism into India. He said, "Communism is spreading. Let it come and be given a fair trial in India." He warned the Govt. saying, "you cannot make India a Harem". He was elected as a Member of the Standing Finance Committee for the Railways, Petition Committee and Small and Cottage Industries Committee, etc.

Pt. Das's Motions Defeated the Govt.

Even though Swaraj (Congress) Party had not got a majority in the Assembly, Pt. Das was successful in getting the support of the other parties to defeat the Govt., in many important matters. By way of an adjournment motion, Govt. was defeated by 53/41 votes and salt tax was removed. Similarly the Amendment Motion of Pt. Das was carried by 65/52 votes with the support of other parties and the ban on the entry of Sri Subhash Ch. Bose to India could be removed even though the Muslim League Members remained neutral.

To help the Small and Cottage Industries, his amendment to reduce the tax was carried inspite of great opposion by the Govt. This shows that Panditji was fighting tooth and nail for the poor and the depressed.

We will discuss in detail his bill on the amalgamation of all Oriya Speaking lands together and bring them under one administration, which he moved on 8.2.1927. This paved the way for the formation of Orissa as a Separate State.

To achieve this, he also rejected the offer of the British Government to adore him with 'KNIGHT' HOOD'. A separate Chapter on this has been devoted in this book.

Nilakantha was elected to the Central Legislature four times in 1924, 1927, 1930 and 1935 and was a member of it for about 16 years. Though he was elected in March, 1930, he resigned the membership within 2 months for participating in the Salt Movement and the period upto 1934 was mostly spent in prison.

Proposed Congress Session at Puri

Pt. Gopabandhu died in 1928 and Pt Nilakantha took over the Leadership and 'became all in all of the Congress in Orissa. His request to hold the

Congress Session at Puri in 1932 was accepted by the High Commands. Unfortunately, the session could not be held at Puri. Congress being declared unlawful in 1931 and Nilakantha's organisational skill could not be proved at the national level. Yet one thing needs mention in this connection. The Utkal Provincial Congress had a hitch as to where the Plenary session of the Congress should be held and the Working Committee formed. It was decided to hold it either at Cuttack or Puri, dependant on the number of Reception Committee members from the district. Pt. Das was at a loss, because Cuttack being a large city with number of big officers and the district having a population of 22 lakhs-more than twice that of Puri, was almost sure to have it and in that case some one from Cuttack could be the Chairman of the Reception Committee. But Pt. Das's skill is unthinkable. He organised the workers in such a way that Puri enrolled over 300 Reception Committee Members, where as Cuttack enrolled only 266 members. One interesting fact was that Panditji could influence the Puri Temple Pandas and got 166 of them enrolled, whereas big leaders like Acharya Harihar and Gopabandhu Choudhury had expected to be able to get atleast one member from amongst them. When Panditji heard this from the latter, he said, "You need not go to canvass at

the Temple, but leave the matter to me and see what I can do."

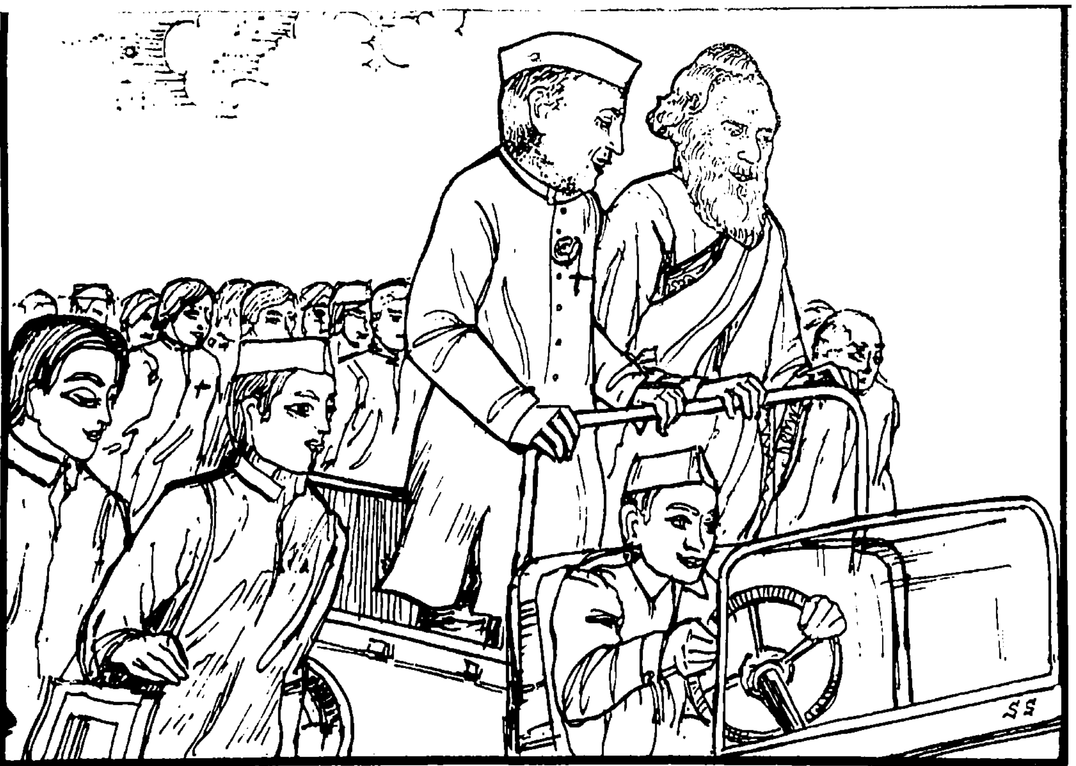
Unfortunately, however, the session could not be held then as stated above.

First Assembly Election in Orissa

Pt. Nilakantha Das did not have to wait long to win the national acclaim. In 1936, elections to Provincial Legislatures, according to the new Constitution in the country were held in India. Nilakantha, as the President of the U.P.C.C. set up 37 candidates and to every one's surprise, got 36 elected.

Panditji's Success and Failures

This was achieved inspite of the virulent opposition of the Rajas and Zamidars, who held their sway particularly in their areas at the time. The province had been newly formed and the Congress Organisation was weak, specially in the areas amalgamated with Orissa. Besides, election was held first in Orissa amongst all provinces. The election result could therefore to some extent, would mould the public opinion in other Provinces. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, who visited Orissa was so pleased that he requested Pt. Das help him in the campaign in U.P. Sardar Patel sent telegram just in two words "Bravo Orissa".



Pandit Nilakantha in Election tour with Jawaharlalji in 1937.

During the busy election campaign when Nehru campaign was going from place to place with Pandit Nilakantha, an interesting thing happened. During the tour, one day a lunch was arranged at Satyabadi. For Pandit Nehru, the recipe as also the stuard boys were brought from Railway Hotel at Puri and servicing were arranged in the western style. Pandit Nilakantha, as is well known in Orissa, is very fond of fish. He arranged to take his food with his associates and sat in the floor in another room for the purpose. After about 20 minutes Pandit Nehru sent for Pandit Nilakantha. Nilakantha told the messenger, "Well, tell Nehruji that Panditji is eating fish. Fish has thorns. It therefore takes time. Any case, I will join him in time." How daring is the man !

The election battle was won, under Panditji's leadership, but he could not enjoy the fruit of his efforts and failed to become the Premier of the Province. A technical reason was adduced that he had not been elected as a member to the Provincial Assembly. This was quite unfair, because, a non-member could become the Chief Minister for at least six months, and get himself elected in the mean time. One of the members could vacate the seat to make his election possible, which is a common practice even now. Even the member, who would

resign to help Panditji in such a case had been finalised.

Prof. N. G. Ranga, the Andhra M. P. and the Deputy Leader of the Congress (I) Party in the Lok Sabha has recently scanned the real reason of this to be some thing else. He says "Pandit Nilakantha was the most powerful Congress Leader among Oriya masses both before and after the formation of Orissa State. He was the leader who campaigned successfully for the Congress success in 1936-37 Election. Yet he was not allowed to become the leader of the Congress Assembly Party and thus attain Chief Ministership. Why? Not only because, by that time, many junior leaders had become ambitious to gain this position, not only because the non-Brahmins were coming to the fore with their claim for recognition, but also because Nilakantha had crossed swords with a number of National Leaders, on account of his euspousal of the demand for formation of a separate State". He further said,

"Many an eminent Oriya Leader has attained Chief Ministership. Governorship and Membership in Central Cabinet. But Nilakantha stands as first among them all in service, scholarship, statesmanship and compared favourably with the first rank of Leaders from all over India."

Panditji's Jail Life

We have already stated in Chapter-II that Pandit Nilakantha was imprisoned for 4 months in 1923. It was during this period that Pandit Gopa-bandhu was also in jail in connection with an agitation against the Raja Sahib of Kanika and Pandit Nilakantha was in charge of Congress Movement in Orissa. After the tr ial, he was ordered to be sent to the Hazaribagh Jail At the appointed time, a Constable came with hand-cuffs and a chain. That was as per the usual practice at that time for taking the political prisoners on the public road and even Pandit Gopabandhu was treated so at Balasore when taken to the court for trial At the sight of the constable with the chain and the hand cuffs, Pandit Nilakantha got enraged and asked him, "What do you want to do ? I am not a thief. Iam a gentle-men. You should behave with me as such. "The S. I. of Police who was there broke into tears and informed the matter to the S. P. Puri. The arrange-ment for that day was cancelled and Pandit Nilakantha had to be taken next day to the Railway Station in a hackney carriage and a Sub-Inspector of Police was sent to escort him in the train. He was also allowed to go round the city of Calcutta. He visited his friends there, was followed by the mass and garlanded at different places.

He was in tne Hazaribagh Jail as an 'A' Class Prisoner from 7.2.23 to 18.6.23.

Again, in connection with the salt movement Pandit Nilakantha was arrested and was produced before the Magistrate on 30.5.1930. The 10th of June was fixed as the date of hearing and the Magistrate ordered that he might be set free from custody on production of a security of Rs. 50/- to the effect that he would attend the court on that date. Nilakantha replied that if the Magistrate did not believe his personal assurance; he would like not to be set free. The Magistrate accepted Nilakantha's personal assurance. This time, he was sentenced to $6\frac{1}{2}$ months imprisonment on 2 charges. He was released a little earlier on 22.12.30 from the Hazaribagh Jail to enable him to attend the all Asia Educational Conference held at Benaras on the 29th December. He went straight to Benaras after his release.

On return from Conference, he joined the Salt Compaign, again & was arrested and sentenced to 2 months imprisonment on 19.1.1931, but was released a little earlier as per Gandhi-Trwin Pact on 10.3.1931.

Nilakantha was again imprisoned on the eve of the Congress Session at Puri, the Congress

Session at Puri, the Congress Organisation being declared unlawful in 1932. On his return from Jamshedpur, where he had gone to give evidence in support of the formation of a separate province for Orissa, he was arrested. Ofcourse, he could only submit his memorandum at Jamshedpur being ordered by the Zonal Head Dr. Rajendra Prasad to Committee. Nilakantha was arrested on 16.1.1932 and was placed as usual as an 'A' Class Prisoner at the Hazaribagh Jail. He became sick there and was sent to Patna for treatment. He was not cured till his release from imprisonment on 1.5.1933. This was his longest confinement in a jail.

In all, he was in jail for more than 2 years and 6 months.

CHAPTER ~ III

NILAKANTHA, THE REVOLUTIONARY

Pt. Nilakantha Joins Subhash Chandra Bose

Pandit Nilakantha was a close associate of the great revolutionary of the century, Sri Subhash Chandra Bose. Nilakantha knew and worked with Sri Bose in many of their social activities, when the latter was a student at Cuttack. But it grew more intense in their later political life. In 1938, Subash was a Presidential candidate of Indian National Congress and won the election for the second term. Panditji, who led the delegates from Orissa did not help him then. So Nilakantha did not mind when Subhash Chandra took Sri Harekrishna Mahtab, a young Congress leader from Orissa, as a member in his Working Committee. Of course. it is said that Subhash repented later for having selected Sri Mahatb because when Subhash was forced to resign on account of differences with Gandhiji, only Pt. Nilakantha and not Sri Mahtab, lent him a full support.

In any case, with Subhash Chandra, it was not only a question of mere friendship for Panditji. It was an article of kinship. Netaji's father,

Sri Janaki Nath Bose had been associated with the Satyabadi School. Subhash also had great emotional leanings towards Orissa as he was born and educated at Cuttack. Once he wrote to Nilakantha "Cuttack is such a town in the world, where the youngsters could have a good life," Netaji's identification with the cause of Orissa must have deeply moved Nilakantha. Further to him, in 1934 Subhash wrote, from Viena "I am born and brought up in the soil of Orissa and to that soil, I am passionately devoted."

Subhash required the help of Panditji in 1929 during the Tin plate strike near Jamsedpur, Nilakantha not only helped him on this but the main point of the strike that the labourers from the Country getting a monthly salary of Rs. 88/- in place of those doing the same work, but coming from abroad getting Rs. 1500/- could be achieved by the Adjornment motion of Panditji in the Central Assembly that could be carried even though Swarajya Party was a minority and the pay was equalised. As stated earlier in 1934, also, Panditji could get the ban on the entry of Subhash into India removed through such a motion in the Central Assembly.

On the advent of Second World War, in 1939 the Congress President, Subhash Chandra told Gandhiji, "We may help the British in the coming

war, provided the British declare as to when they would part with power to India." Gandhiji replied, "Since the Britishers are in trouble now, I cannot ask them such a question." "This was an opportune time, "Subhash argued in vain" for the purpose." However, with this difference with Gandhiji regarding getting the commitment from the British Govt. Subhash resigned from the Presidentship of the Indian National Congress and formed a new party, the Forward Block, inside the Congress. When he visited Orissa. Nilakantha, as President of the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee, welcomed him and accorded him a grand unprecedented reception at Cuttack taking Subhash on an elephant along me main roads. He also held meetings both at Cuttack, Berhampur, Puri and Balasore, the from important politicaily conscious towns of Orissa and other small places like Chandanpur in Puri district. The Congress High Command asked for an explanation from Panditji for this. Nilakantha argued that arranging a reception for a former Congress President is neither unjust nor an anti-party activity. Thereafter, Nilakantha resigned from the Presidentship of the Congress in Orissa and allied himself fully with Subhash Chandra. Subhash was not only amazed at the great reception given to him at the above mentioned places in Orissa, but was exceedingly pleased at Nilakantha's wit and method



Pt. Nilakantha with Subhash Chandra Bose at Chandanpur. (Near Puri) meeting in 1939, where Sri Bose acclaimed him as UTKAL GURU.

of winning over people. He had known about Panditji's great organising capacity, his singular achievement like victory in the Orissa Assembly Election and his great efforts for the formation of the new Orissa Province. After the meeting at Chandanpur, Subhash could realise what a great Organiser and powerful orator Panditji was. He felt that Nilakantha was really the Lion of Utkal. This, we may find to be in line with what the Governor Sri B. N. Panday expressed to be the openion of the visitors in the Central Assembly. Subhash however, expressed that Panditji was really the Inspirer of Orissa, the UTKALA GURU.

Formation of the Parlakhemundi Coalition Ministry in Orissa

On return to Calcutta, Subhash Chandra called for Pandit Nilakantha with some of his party members for consultation. The second world war had already begun. Subhash convinced Nilakantha that by installing ministeries in Eastern States i. e Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam, the entry of Japan to India would be easy and through the help of Japan, it would be easier to obtain independence of India. All the same, as the Congress had a majority in the Orissa Assembly, it was very difficult a job to form a coalition ministry. But

Nilakantha succeeded in doing so. The Ministry was sworn in on 24. 11. 41 & was headed by the Maharaja of Parlakhemundi, one of the architects of modern Orissa, who had great regards for Panditji for his efforts in the formation of the State. Pandit Godavarish Mishra, one of the five Satyavadi Comrades belonging to Nilakantha's party, and Abdus Sobhan Khan, the Secretary of the Orissa Branch of the Muslim - League were the other Ministers. This non-congress Ministry implemented many schemes for the advancement of Orissa that would be ever recorded as extremely significant in the annals of Political History of Orissa. Inspite of the financial stringency during the War years, the Ministry could set-up the Utkal University in 1943 on the report of Pt. Nilakantha, This we may notice was a dream of Panditji since 1927, when he had made this demand in the Central Legislative Assembly, The Ministry also put up the Orissa High Court, for which too, Pt. Nilakantha had demanded in the Central Assembly.

Nilakantha was not in the Govt. But he was the leader of the National War Front, Orissa Branch. What he spoke in the guise of aiding the war efforts was significant. "Let the people of India, unarmed as they are, train themselves so that they may take the opportunity given them by this war and be able to seize it and maintain their freedom."

In one of the War Front Meetings at Cuttack Town Hall, Nilakantha saw a banner "God Save the King" hanging in the Hall. He immediately flew to a rage and asked the organisers to remove the banner and instead, put another as "God Save the Nation". This was done, but the matter was reported to the Governor and his real intention of installing the Ministry, having been suspected, Pt. Nilakantha had at last, to resign from the War Front Leadership.

The Ministry was in office for about $2\frac{1}{2}$ years and the Maharaja tendered his resignation on 30th June, 1944, on the advice of Pt. Nilakantha, who felt that a lot of malpractices had crept into the administration, which if allowed any further, would tarnish their name and fame. In the words of Panditji, "I allowed the Ministry to be dissolved when I found it reactionary" This not only shows the selflessness of the Maharaja, but to what extent, he respected Pt. Nilakantha as his Political Adviser.

Panditji's Entry to the Congress after the war Disallowed.

Even after it was known that the contribution of Netaji and his associates was in no way antagonstic to the cause of country's fight for independence, the Congress High Command did not allow the

group associated with the Forward Block to return to the Congress after the war was over, Panditji was no exception.

The following facts were not considered then :

How Netaji & his followers expedited India's Independence.

Netaji Subhash died in a plane accident while going to Japan during the war and the war ended with the defeat of the Enemies. The INA Soldiers were then brought to India as Prisoners of war for trial. Sri Bulabhai Desai and Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru appeared and fought on their behalf. There was a great commotion in the country and also among the army. Besides, a strike broke out in the Navy at Bombay.

It was later known and in-fact the then Prime-Minister of England, Clement Attlee in 1957 expressed at Calcutta that as the British Raj had to suspect the loyalty of the Indian Army and the Indian Navy, they had to take a hurried decision to part with power. India attained Independence on the 15th August, 1947. Dr. Sri Rama Chandra Dash, the renowned educationist Statesman and

Retired Professor of Political Science of Utkal University, in recapitulating all the steps taken by Panditji during the war period at different stages has commended in so many words the correctness of the philosophy in Panditji's scientific observation of political future of the country.

Nilakanth Remained Aloof from Politics

It was in this context that when Pt. Nilakantha applied for a Congress Ticket for fighting the election in 1946, his war time activities were not understood in the right perspective and his application to contest as a Congress candidate was not accepted by the Congress High Command. Pandit Das was a man of great principle and even though he had all chances of winning the election, he remained aloof inspite of the persuation by his partymen to fight the election from his own constituency, Satyabadi. He told them, "It would be a breach of pledge, I have given to the Congress with my application of Candidature, if I fight the election against the Congress." He thus proved his intense sense of political morality, unparalled in the political history of India. Even his political foe, Dr. Harekrishna Mahatab, who was the Congress Leader in Orissa then, greatly appreciated this stand of Panditji.

Formation of Swadhin Janasangha

After devoting 5 years time in purely literary work, Pt. Nilakantha who had taken the oath to see the country better before death, now on the eve of 1951 election, consulted his colleagues like Pt. Godavarish Mishra. Sri Dibakar Patnaik, Sri Jadumani Mangaraj and others as to their future course of activities. It was decided to form a new party and fight the election, as per the wishes of their supporters. And the party was named 'SWADHIN JANASANGHA'.

Needless to mention the vast task ahead of them, not only to mobilise the party workes, but to meet the election cost within this short period, even though their policy was "No Note for any Vote". But Nilakantha's ability was enormous, as was evident both in the formation of the state and the first Election in 1936. Pt. Das was now over 65 years of age and his own constituency had been so re-organised now that most of the area was not accessible except by bullock cart. Further more, that being the seasion of reaping paddy, the farmers could only be available before the day break or long after the night fall. Nilakantha had to meet the challenge. So no sooner, the party workers go to sleep, Nilakantha would wake them up exhorting "Shrama Pare Bishram", meaning there should be

rest only after hard labour and this being the time for work there is no question of rest.

No doubt, the skill, wisdom and presence of mind of Pt. Nilakantha was well known to everybody of the time. These however, become more obvious during 1951 Election, when he had to meet many hostile demonstrations and large groups of audience while conducting tours and meetings in support of his candidates. Nilakantha could meet all the adverse questions and satisfy the audience. In one of the meetings near Banpur, the constituency of Pt. Godavarish, a queer question was asked by a group of intelligent young people, "Sire, we agree, you are selfless and devoted persons and will be fighting for the well being of the State, no doubt, but could you say, what would a few members of your party do, in a democratic set up as the Congress will be in large majority ?" Nilakantha then rose up and asked the youth to look at the Banyan tree close by. "Will you please tell me what would happen to the group of monkeys sitting on the tree, when a tiger approaches and roars below ?" To this question, the reply came from the audience that out of fear they may fall down one after another. Nilakantha then said, "There will be atleast two tigers, I myself and Godavarish, in the Assembly."

The party Swadhin Jana Sangha was over whelmed with the wit & presence of mind of Pt. Das & remembered the remarks made by Netaji Subhash a few years back and crowned Nilakantha, as UTKALA GURU in 1951 at a largely attended meeting at Puri.

Crowning of Pt. Nilakantha as 'UTKALA GURU'

Crowning Pandit Nilakantha as 'UTKALA GURU' has a small history as has been already stated. The incident where this was indicated by Sri Subhash Chandra Bose, later known as Netaji, in 1939, after forming the Forwad Block has been narrated. As is known, the country's politics was in great turmoil at that time and Sri Subhash Bose was going about explaining the aims of his party every where. In a largely attended public meeting at Chandanpur near Puri, people started asking Subhash Chandra, "How is it that you were speaking in favour of the Congress till yesterday and now you have started telling very loudly against it ?" Pandit Nilakantha, who was presiding, immediately retorted, "Subhash Babu has not to give the reply, I will explain it" He then started narrating the story of the Rishi and the angel Menaka and said, "When the Rishi was in intense meditation and the position of Indra became unstable, Indra had to send the most

beautiful angel Menaka to disturb the meditation. She could do nothing to divert the attention of the Rishi even after 3 days of her continuous melodious singing and enchanting dancing She watched and watched and at last found that the Rishi was chewing some pieces of the bark of the Neem tree, under which he was in meditation as his only food, his eyes still closed. Menaka, the intelligent angel, thought out a plan. She besmeared some honey over the bark of the part of the tree, from which the Rishi was picking up the pieces. As usual, the Rishi chewed some pieces of bark and was astonished in finding them intensely sweet. Suddenly he opened his eyes and was amazed to see the beautiful angel Menaka, still singing and dancing. The old Rishi took her in his arms and went away to his hermitage''. Amidst loud laughter and clappings Panditji continued, "That is the position of the Congress-wallas now. With the little power given to the Provincial Legislatures, they have gone mad and have forgotten that we have still to go a long way and fight for our independence Subhash Babu is out to remind them of their duty and find out ways and means. He will now explain that."

Not only Subhash Chandra was amazed to find the wit and the power of Panditji to win over and

inspire the people, but he expressed that Panditji is not only his GURU, but the GURU or teacher of all Utkal—UTKALA GURU.

Pandit Nilakantha In Orissa Legislative Assembly

We have seen that in 1951, Pt. Nilakantha formed a party of his own, the Swadhina Janasangha Four persons including himself and his colleague, Pt. Godavarish Mishra were elected and sat in the Opposition. The declared policy of the Party was not to oppose the Govt. only for the sake of doing so. Nilakantha said that they would oppose the Govt.'s steps, which were contrary to the interest of the State, but not otherwise.

As a result, the then Chief Minister, Sri Nabakrishna Choudhury, a true Gandhite and a Bhooden Leader not only appreciated Panditji's proposals and suggestions in the Assembly and accepted them, but often used to tell him in the Assembly itself. "Panditji, why don't you sit on this side and give us these valuable suggestions"? After several such requests, he could understand Panditji's mind.

Panditji's Return To Congress

The Chief Minister, Sri Naba Krishna Choudhury could then persuade the Prime Minister of India and President of Indian National Congress, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru to prevail upon Panditji to come back to the Congress. A resolution was adopted accordingly by the Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee. Pandit Nehru came down to meet Pandit Nilakantha in person at Cuttack and requested him like wise in the Raj Bhavan, then at Cuttack. He went back and wrote to Pt. Nilakantha from Delhi in March, 1955, "You were in the old days, a pillar of the Congress in Orissa and it was a matter of sorrow to me, as to others that you should have left us fifteen years ago I shall be happy indeed. if you come back to the congress and help us with your wise counsel."

Pandit Nilakantha, on receipt of this letter. went to his Constituency and met the people in several meetings. After getting their unreserved approval in all the meetings and by personal discussions with top workers, he joined the Congress in May. People had not only the highest regard for Nilakantha, they also appealed to him to return to the political party that Pt. Gopabandhu and he himself had built up in Orissa, particularly as the main aims had been fulfilled after attainment of

Swaraj. Again, they got him returned unopposed to the Orissa Assembly in the 1957 election Nilakantha then adorned the Speaker's Chair of the Orissa Legislative Assembly for over 4 years.

On proposing Pt. Nilakantha as the Speaker, Dr Hare Krishna Mahtab, who became the Chief Minister of Orissa & who had opposed him strongly on various occasions, paid glowing trilutes to Panditji for his selflessness and vast learning & experience in Legislative matters. He also stated among other things, "........I have opposed Panditji strongly. This is natural for men like us. We are traditional people He is a great man, a seer who was unconventional in his ways. We did not like to travel the untrodden ways and opposed him".

Pandit Nilakantha, The Speaker

Pt. Nilakantha was informed while at Cuttack that he had been elected for Speakership from the Congress Party. He expressed no reaction on this because he had no desire to be the Chief Minister of the State at that old age. All the same, due to his long 20 years of Parliamentary experience, both at the Centre and State Legislature, he was not only well suited to this important post, but his glowing and learned face with a beautiful, white beard led many to say that the House wore a

majestic look like that of the royal court (Raja Sabha) of the king Vikramaditya of the 14th Century. It attracted many people from far and near, who wanted at least to have a look of the House when Panditji was on the chair.

Pt. Das was a balanced Speaker, who observed all the latest rules and procedures in giving his rulings. He was quite vigilant in maintaining the dignity of the House. In case of great differences between the Treasury and the Opposition Benches, he would ask the prominent members of the parties to meet him at his Chamber. He held discussions with them, & all respectfully accepted his final judgement! One of the erstwhile shrewed politicians and experienced M. L. As. the leader of the P. S. P. Group, Sri Banka Bihari Das has expressed this in the following words "True, we had our own openions, very different from Panditji's, but when we looked at his glowing countenance, we just forgot our own view points",

Great as he was, he has created at least two important records in the annals of the parliamentary practices :-

(i) The speaker's Secretariat in Orissa which was so long under the Executive Govt. was separated and put under the Speaker himself. For this, he had

to fight a lot with the Govt. till at one stage, he told the Chief Minister, Dr. H. K. Mahtab that he would lock up the Assembly until this was done Dr Mahtab had to read-out the Govt. order to the effect the very same day in the Assembly.

(ii) The Speaker never 'dies' i.e. even when a Ministry falls, the Speaker continues in office till a new Speaker is elected. The practice was otherwise in the country and in many other previous cases, the Speakers had to quit along with the Ministers.

Panditji had to represent the matter to the Govt. of India. Being a man of principle, he even left his official residence, when his name as a Speaker was dropped with fall of the Ministry and this he did inspite of the State Governor's personal request to await the decision of the Centre with regard to the issue he had raised. The matter was examined for a long time both at the official and Prime Minister Nehru's level and at last Panditji's contention was held valid and he was treated as Speaker with retrospective effect. Even though the Ministry fell on 27.2.61, Panditji was treated as the Speaker till 1.7.61.

Honours for Pt Nilakantha Pro-chancellor, Utkal University

Pandit Nilakantha was elected as the Pro-Chancellor of Utkal University in 1955 by the

Senate. We can hardly express the happy feelings that Panditji would be having on this occasion, for he had dreamt of it and worked for it since 1927. Besides, on the basis of his report, the University Bill was passed in 1943 and it was established by Pt. Godavarish Mishra, Education Minister, the Dy. Leader of his party.

He continued as such for long seven years and brought out a lot of changes in the existing Rules and Regulations of the University.

Pandit Nilakantha was conferred the Hony.D.Litt. (Doctor of Literature) by the Utkal University in 1955 in a special convocation at which the Chief Guest Sri Krishna Menon spoke very highly of Panditji.

Padma Bhusan :

The title "PADMA BHUSAN" was awarded to Pandit Nilakantha in 1957. Dr, Rajendra Prasad, President of India and a close friend of Pt. Das and co-prisoner with him in Hazaribagh Jail came down to Bhubaneswar to award the title. He was with Panditji at his residence along with the Governor of Orissa for over 40 minutes and thus exchanged their reminiscences. He took tea with Panditji, quite

unscheduled, and remained much longer than the scheduled time.

One interesting thing worth mentioning in this connection is that when the Award of title 'PADMA BHUSANA' was communicated to Pt. Das his son, Advocate Ashok Das advised him not to accept the title, it being too small for him Panditji asked, "Well, Rajendra Babu is a friend of mine Should I tell him, "No, I will not accept any title below 'PADMA BIBHUSANA'. Afterall, the title does not add to or become a part of my body".

In fact, when one of his son-in-laws Eng. M. S. Das sent letters from England to him addressed as "Padma Bhusan Dr. Pandit Nilakantha Das", he advised him not to do so and wrote that he was better known as Pandit Nilakantha Das.

The First President, Orissa Sahitya Akademy

In 1958, the Orissa Sahitya Akademy was newly formed and Pt. Nilakantha became the First President. It is said that Dr. Mahtab, the then Chief Minister approached him and discussed about the formation of such an organisation. He also asked him as to what would be the pay and other emoluments for the President. Pandit Nilakantha immediately retorted, "Do you want me to take up

a Govt. Service, which I have never done in my life ? You may have to provide adequate number of staff for the Organisation. As per myself, I would only require the departmental vehicle to attend the meetings, etc.".

His Last Days

Pandit had a prolonged bed rest for about 1½ years, being a diabetic patient. He was staying at Cuttack with his eldest son-in-law, Sri D. Rath a Superintending Engineer of Irrigation Deptt. The then Chief Ministers both Sri Biju Patnaik and Sri Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo gave orders that as long as Panditji would be staying with Sri Rath, he should not disturbed from Cuttack. Panditji had a personal attendant Ganeswar Mishra, a devoted worker seldom found, & Panditji's wife Smt. Radhamani Devi remained present all along by his bed side.

Smt. Radhamani Devi

We will be failing in our duty, if we donot give a few Paragraphs regarding this pious lady, of whom Panditji has also written a long paragraph in his autobiography. She was about 11 years of age when Nilakantha married her. She came of a lower middle class family of a nearby village. When Nilakantha attained the age of 20, still a student of

Matriculation Class, proposals came from many corners. One of them was from a very rich Zamindar family at Puri. When Nilakantha heard of it, he recited the following sloka to his father from Bhababhuti, which says that self earning is the best and earning from one's wife's source is the worst.

"ଉତ୍ତମଂ ସ୍ୱାର୍ଜିତଂ ବିତ୍ତଂ
ମଧ୍ୟମଂ ପିତୃ ଉଜତଂ
ଅଧମଂ ଭ୍ରାତୃ ବିତ୍ତଂଚ
ସ୍ତ୍ରୀ ବିତ୍ତ ମଧମାଧମଂ ।"

The father denied the proposal of the Zamindar which then meant Rs. 4,000/- in cash, all gold ornaments to the bride, at that time about 80—100 tolas and the study expenses as long as Nilakantha would read, even in foreign countries.

Another interesting thing is that the horoscope of Radhamani Devi indicated that she would become a widow soon. We know that Nilakantha was of philosophical bent of mind and so had little belief in horoscopes, prepared by village astrologers. He immediately got hold of the horoscope of the girl and tore it off and instead, made out a new one. The marriage was performed. When this was known later, his old father was extremely sad, but Nilakantha could explain to him how the horoscopes

prepared by such ignorant persons, were not correct. The lady however, enjoyed 62 years of happy married life with Panditji.

She was a real mate of Nilakantha. She served the old in-laws to the best of her ability, took care of the household and the five children, when Nilakantha was imprisoned. She had also to be in jail as an 'A' Class prisoner for joining the Non-co-operation Movement for some time, leaving behind her youngest 3-years old daughter. She took active parts in a lot of development works in the area and founded an M. E. school for the girls at Satyabadi which soon became a High School. She was its first President.

She was a very kind hearted lady and helped the distressed in the locality to the extent possible. She survived Panditji for 12 years. In the last part of her life, she was staying with her youngest daughter at Puri. She expressed a wish that she should be laid to rest by the side of her husband at Satyabadi "Pancha Sakha Samadhi Pitha" rather than at Swargadwar at Puri. This was done with thousands of people chanting "Haribol" at Satyabadi, even though nobody, after death other than the Pancha Sakhas were allowed a place there.

Panditji's Last Journey

Panditji died on 6.11.67 at Cuttack. A precedence was created by the then Government in which the Chief Minister, Sri Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo accompanied the bier along with thousands in the cold wintry night from Cuttack to Sakhigopal via : Bhubaneswar, Nilakantha's mortal remains getting floral tributes all along the way. He was cremated in the early hours of the 7th November at the **Pancha Sakha Pitha** by the side of Pandit Gopabandhu and Pandit Godavarish and other Sakha like Sri Krupasindhu Misra, the last Headmaster of Satyabadi with full State Honours, with the Chief Minister present.

Though Pandit Nilakantha could not become the Premier or the Chief Minister of the State. To quote Prof. N. G. Ranga, Deputy Leader of Congress (I) Party, in Loksabha, "he not only enriched the socio-cultural heritage, but was the veritable father of Orissa State" and was instrumental in expediting India's Independence. His glorious deeds are being fathomed in increasing manner day by day, which is the essence of couplet that Panditji very often used to sing during his life time :—

Forty States of Greece and Rome.
Claimed Homer dead,
For on all their streets, Homer
used to beg his daily bread.

CHAPTER - IV

PANDIT NILAKANTHA, THE TEACHER IN LITERATURE THE INSPIRER IN POLITICS AND A RENOWNED PHILOSOPHER,

A Teacher in Literature

One of the celebrated poets of Orissa, Sri Ananta Patnaik described Pandit Nilakantha as one, who was simultaneously a teacher in Literature, an Inspirer in Politics and a Telescopic observer as a Philosopher. We have seen Pandit Nilakantha as a Teacher - the Headmaster of Vana Vidyalaya at Satyabadi, a Professor in Calcutta University, the Headmaster of the National High School at Sambalpur and also as a Lecturer in the National College, again at Satyabadi We will be missing much, if we don't know how he was a Teacher in Literature. We may now briefly narrate, his role as Literateur and consider his own writings :

A Writer from his student days —

Nilakantha was a good writer from his student days. He has himself stated that there was no students' Organisation at Puri or Cuttack of which, he was not the President or Secretary. But it is

interesting to note that his first article on Samanta Chandra Sekhara, the renowned Astrologist was published only in 1907, after about two years of his writing it, in the famous monthly magazine "UTKAL SAHITYA". The celebrated Peot of Orissa, Sri Madhu Sudan Rao sent his congratulations to Nilakantha. Nilakantha, also received another appreciative letter from a notable person Sri Uma Charan Mohapatra, who later became the Govt. Translator stating, "It was very good and I read it with much gusto."

Nilakantha's early essays on Madhu Sudan Rao, Radhanath Ray and Sarala Das has made him known as a great critic. But he made it both as an Essayist and a Poet during his Satyabadi days.

When he became the Headmaster of the Vana Vidyalaya, established with the sole aim of fulfilling their vow "to see the country better before their death" & which Gopabandhu termed as a Factory to produce real men (Manisha Gadha Karakhana), Nilakantha devoted himself in writing many Peoms on Truth and Divinity (collected as Bhakti Gatha), many of which were sung by the school boys in their prayer meetings and on religious occasions like Ganesh Puja and Saraswati Puja etc. In later years he also wrote many peoms for the Children,

collected as 'Pilanka Geeta' on various topics of child's interest. To bring out the students as good people, Nilakantha during this period of his Head Mastership, brought out in Oriya for the boys and girls Oriya translation of the 3 important epics of India, (Pilanka) Ramayan, (Pilanka) Mahabharat & (Pilanka) Bhagabat. In this connection, Dr. David M. Brookman, an American, Indic scholar while editing the English version of **Pilanka Mahabharat** opines as follows—

"During his tenure as Headmaster of the Satyabadi School, Pt. Nilakantha evidenced a remarkable ability to identify wity children and to enter into their out look. But writing in an idiom, they could understand, he hoped, to arouse their natural curiousity and to engage their will so that they might persue their own quest for truth. This rendering of the Creat Epic, the Mahabharat, then, is the gift of Nilakantha to the Children of India and with its English Translation, to the English—speaking world. For, within it are contained ethical teachings—teachings on 'dharma' (duty, righteousness) that were established at least two thousand and five hundred years ago".

Nilakantha's Kavyas :

Nilakantha was Headmaster of Satyabadi School only for 7 years upto 17th September, 1918.

After being relieved from the heavy charge of both the Headmastership of the school and the Superintendentship of the Hostel, Nilakantha diverted more of his attention to writing. After reading most of the Oriya Kabyas, he felt that Orissa had a great heritage which had not been properly brought to light and the Orissan Culture had been jeopardised in many ways. He started writing Kabyas to illustrate the real heritage and Culture of Orissa. During this period, he wrote Kabyas PRANAYINI, DASA NAYAK after the English Poet Tennnyson and original Kavyas, 'KONARKE' and 'KHARAVELA'.

Pranayini :

Nilakantha's first Kavya is Pranayini. It is written in asymmetrical lyrics and was published in 1919. It deals with the need of improvement of the status of the women folk their education and social independence. Even though Nilakantha acknowledges to have written the Kavya after Tennyson's 'The Princess' it speaks out how Nilakantha was keen on this aspect of the women while trying to bring out 'Real man for the Country.'

The language of the Kavya is stiff, even though learned persons like Palli Kavi Nandakishore Bal denies it and appreciated this Kavya very much, while reciting some stanzas from memory.

Dasa Nayak :

This Kavya is also after Tennyson's Enoch Arden, but is written in very easy and simple language of the common village folk quite Contrary to Pranayini. This depicts how a married women is unwilling to take a second husband even after waiting for the husband for several years and with very many suspicious events regarding his death even though second marriage is common in their Society.

Konarke

Infact, Nilakantha did not write the Kavya 'KONARKE'. He dictated this volume of 260 pages in two parts in 2 weeks' time to a co-teacher of Satyabadi school. The first part deals with his reminescence on the glory of ancient Utkal and was dectated as if addressing to his pupils whom he took on an excursion to Konarka when they had to take rest and fell asleep in a nearby temple Rama Chandi due to heavy cyclonic weather. The teacher had no sleep during the night and went on narrating the ancient past of the land. The second part of the Kavya, "Mayadevi" deals with the episode of the construction of the Sun Temple at this sea shore in memory of his lady love, the

daughter of the feudetary king of Sisupal Garh near Bhubaneswar.

Dr. Mayadhar Mansingh, reviewing the book remarked. "Pandit Nilakantha is a real Pandit". I am a child before him both in age and in knowledge x x x Nilakantha, the politician may be no more after his death, but Nilakantha, the author of Kavya 'Konarke' is immortal" Dr. Mansingh's above openion on Pandit Nilakantha's Political achievements has been proved to be wrong, when we consider that his association with Sri Subhas Chandra Bose (Netaji) and the Forward Block paved the way for early attainment of Independence by India after the World War-II. Of course this was not known to Dr. Mansingh and most of the people of Orissa and India at that time.

Kharavela

The Kavya KHARAVELA depicts the achievements of the King Kharavela, who reigned about 2100 years ago and ruled over the entire land from cape Camorin to the Himalayas and on the Eastern Coast upto Bombay after conquering various regions. He was crowned as a king at the age of 24 and reigned for over 30 years. He then spent his last life with his queen Dhusi as a Sanyasi in the caves of Udayagiri near Bhubaneswar. at this time,

the Oriyas were having Trade communication in Bali and Java islands. Nilakantha has depicted in the Kavya Kharavela the invasion of Afganistan and Beluchistan, where the Oriyas were facing troubles for trading.

Regarding Kavyas Konarke and Kharavela, Dr. H. K. Mahtab writes that even though Nilakantha was a born-philosopher, he took up writing the Kavyas "KONARKE"&"KHARAVELA" because he wanted to high light the past glory of Orissa and it is Nilakantha, who for the first time, brought Kharavela to Oriya literature and through it, to the notice of Oriyas. It is also a wonder that till Nilakantha wrote Kavya 'KONARKE', the temple of Konarka did not attract the attention of the foreigners.

Labanyabati : Tika-O-Byakshya—
(Annotation and Interpretation)

Pandit Nilakantha during his imprisonment in Hazaribagh Jail in 1931, also wrote a learned and crytical annotation of LABANYABATI, a Kavya of the famous poet of Orissa Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja of the 17th Century. This was at a time when Panditji was fighting for a separate State for Orissa on linguistic basis. The Book was mainly meant

to exhibit that a very rich Oriya Language flourished as early as that time and was in reply particularly to the protest of the Bengalis, who said that Oriya is a dialect of Bangali and a separate State cannot be claimed on this ground.

The other reason produced by Pandit Nilakantha to Sri H. K. Mahtab, a co-prisioner with him as to why Panditji took up writing the annotation of such a Kavya was that he very much apprecia ted the example of the pure and intense love set up by the Kavi Samrat who came from a Raj family towards his wife, when adultery and polygamy was the common customs of the day. Panditji flew to immotion to describe what was being done at the present time, against Indian and Orissan Culture.

Needless to say that Panditji was the first Chairman to organise the celebration of Kabi Samrat Bhanja Jayanti at Cuttack, Bhubaneswar and other places.

Nilakantha, Editor of News Papers and Magazines :

It may be interesting to note that he could write in various styles, both prose and poetry, suitable for all classes of prople from village folk to the highly learned people in very simple and easy

language as also in very stiff and difficult ones. He was one of the pioneers of journalism in Orissa. He took it as a duty along with Gopabandhu and Godavarish to write almost daily for the ASHA at Berhampur, edited the SEVA at Sambalpur during the National Movement and edited the SAMAJ at Cutttack for sometime after the death of Pandit Gopabandhu. He also brought out a weekly LOKMAT on the eve of the first election in Orissa in 1936.

Nababharat

Pandit Nilakantha edited the celebrated monthly Magazine, NABABHARATA from 1934 to 1953, with occasional breaks.

He also published a daily paper of the same name **Nababharat** from Cuttack from 1941 to 1946. Being a Pandit himself, he used to write on various aspects of Orissan culture, the Jagannath cult as also on the contemporary palitical situation.

The journalistic writings and also the books, he authored the style used is inimitable. It may be of interest to know that the trend of the Oriya Language from the time of Satyabadi age took a different turn, each of the Satyabadi Comrades, of course having a speciality of his own. But

Nilakantha's way of writing and teaching literature was unique, which he practised mostly through his Magazine, the 'NABABHARAT'. It was being contributed by the intelligentia and the various experts in different fields of scholarship, who aspired to send articles to this magazines, it being the most renowned magazine of the time. It was the quality of the articles and its language and not the name of the writer which determined its selection for publication. The articles were not only throughly scrutinised, but in many instances, the writers were called for discussion and the articles were corrected, altered or modified as was necessary before their publication. The writers heaved a sigh of relief, when these were published. Panditji thus left innumerable renowned writers behind, who had been trained and inspired by him.

B. The Inspirer in Politics

How Pt. Nilakantha inspired the mass, whether politically enlighted or otherwise, has been dealt with under various topics. It may be enough to know that Panditji never lost in any election, from whichever party he stood, even though his declared policy was "No Note for any Vote".

Pandit Nilakantha was in active politics for about 40 years. During this period

Pandit Gopabandhu was the leader of the Congress in Orissa only for a period of seven years. Pandit Nilakantha became 'ALL IN ALL' after his death in 1928, both in Orissa Congress and in Orissa politics for over 30 years. He must have addressed about 1,000 political meetings and brought the Congress to the forefront. It is obivious that in the Election Campaign during in 1936-37, he could inspire the mass with the name of Mahatma Gandhi and the great Congress Organisation that was fighting for the independence of India and exhorted that election of any candidate against it would jeopardise this main aim of the country in his usual witty and humorous way. We may also look to his winning over people during the period when he left the trodden path of non-co-operation movement of the Congress and fought against it. We have narrated:—

1) The incident of the reception given to Sri Subhas Chandra Bose particularly at Chandanpur meeting near Puri in 1939.

2) The election meeting of Pandit Godavarish Mishra, the Deputy Leader of his party at Banapur in 1951.

3) His statement in the Orissa Assembly in reply to the change that they were not traitors in any

sense, but Pt. Nehru the then congress President during 1936-37, and the then Prime Minister of India could be termed as such in the political sense of the term and

4) When he got the support of the people of his constituency to return to the congress in 1955 which would show how he could carry the mass as else the enlightened politicians with his point.

Now, we just cannot resist the temptation of citing one instance that happend in the beginning of the formation of coalition Ministry in Orissa in 1941 against the Congress when the Congress was very popular.

The Education Minister, Pandit Godavarish Mishra made a tour programme to Kakatpur via : Nimapara in Puri Distrist. On receipt of a C.I.D. report of an anticipated violent demonstration at Nimapara, he wanted to cancel it. When Pt. Nilakantha heard this, he advised Pt. Mishra not to do so and volunteered to accompany him in the trip to face the demonstration, as otherwise, he said, such anti-demonstrations would be arranged wherever they would go. On approach to Nimapara

they heard loud slogans "Get back, you traitors" continuously. Nilakantha's loud voice could seldom quench this. He waited for about 5 minutes. When the slogans slowed down a little, Nilakantha got down from the car and in his usual loud & forceful voice declared "We agree to get back, provided you will please let us know how we have gone Traitors at this advanced age of ours ? During our life, having suffered and done so much for the state and the country, we must know this from you. Let us have a full discussion on this. But it should be on one condition that if you can prove us to be traitors, we will get back from here, otherwise you may have to accompany us in the trip to Kakatpur". Who could meet Panditji's points of the necessity of helping the war efforts of the Britishers then ? As a result people present felt embarrassed having staged the demonstration against their beloved leaders and many of them had to accompany them to Kakatpur.

We will however, deal in detail as to how he could inspire the people and the Govt. that helped in two of his outstanding political achievements in this Chapter i.e. his **signal** contributions to (I) the formation of the Orissa State and (II) the last struggle for India's independence.

FORMATION OF THE ORISSA STATE NILAKANTHA THE VERITABLE FATHER OF ORISSA

Utkal Sammilani

The Congress Leaders in Orissa preferred to remain as notable ones in All India politics without caring much for the interest of Orissa. It may be recalled that Madhusudan Das, the grand old man of Orissa, had founded 'UTKALA SAMMILANI' and risked his national status for the unification of the Oriya speaking areas, many of which were then lying in Bengel, Bihar, Madras and Central Provinces in each of which the Oriyas were in minority. The Oriyas had retained their own culture and language for almost a century despite their unfavourable minority status.

Nilakantha's Efforts

KAKINADA CONGRESS— Nilakantha acted as a bridge between the Indian National Congress and the Utkala Sammilani. According to Sri Radhanath Ray, a celebrated poet of Orissa, Utkala is the mother and Bharat (The Indian Union) is the grand mother. It may be recalled that according to Hindu practice, it is customary to offer food

to the mother first during the Sraddha ceremony and then to the grand mother. Pandit Nilakantha therefore, perhaps thought amidst much criticism from some Congress men that the cause of unification of Oriya speaking areas was to be taken up first as a part of his aim for serving the Nation as a whole. Making the cause of Orissa his own, Nilakantha therefore, (after being released from imprisonment, while Gopabandhu was still in prison) brought a resolution in the All India Congress Session held at Kakinada in December, 1923, that the border issue between Orissa and Andhra be settled by March, 1924 by the Congress with mutual discussions. He could influence Gandhiji to agree to this. Sri Rajagopalachari, was made the Chairman and Orissa was represented by Pandit Nilakantha, ably assisted by Sri Niranjan Patnaik, whereas Dr. Sitaramayya and Venkat Satyanarayana represented Andhra. As the Committee could not make much headway, Sri Rajagopalachari resigned and Dr. Rajendra Prasad was appointed as the Chairman. He also tried to arbitrate but failed.

Mukhalingam Conference

Meanwhile, the Phillip-Doff Committee appointed by the Government of India gave a report in favour of Orissa's demands. The Andhras tried to

protest against this vehemently. The Andhra Historical Research Society was established by the Andhra Government. They arranged to hold a conference at Mukhalingam near Parlakhemundi on 16th & 17th June, 1927 with the sole purpose of proving that ancient Kalinga was a part of Andhra and in that case, it could be established that the Oriya speaking areas from Jeypore upto Chilka Lake (which were then in Koraput and Ganjam districts respectively of the then Madras Presidency) could be taken as parts of Madras. They tried their best to collect all possible materials on this. Pandit Nilakantha was requested by Sri S. B. Rath, Editor, the 'ASHA' to attend the Conference at the last movement when no assistance was available from official sources in Orissa. Among many Andhra Pandits, Nilakantha vigorously argued that the area around Dantaur in the Ganjam district was the place where the holy tooth of Lord Budha was worshipped. This is indicative of Orissa's culture in the area and it can not belong to Andhra. The Andhra Pandits were not only amazed at Panditji's vast learning, but had to remain mute having, no arguments to offer. The Maharaja of Parlakhemundi and the Maharaja of Jeypore, two other architects of mordern Orissa warmly congratulated Panditji there Dr. S. N. Rajguru, an eminent historian, & an archiologist then a Research Scholar present in

the conference had stated that he along with many other such youngsters present, fell flat at Panditji's feet in the meeting itself to express their gratitude.

Pandit Gopabandhu wrote an editorial in the 'SAMAJ', the then popular weekly in Orissa, praising the efforts of his colleague Pt. Nilakantha in this regard.

Nilakantha's Resolution in Central Assembly

We had already stated that in 1927, Pandit Nilakantha made a powerful speech and moved a resolution in the Central Assembly for putting all the Oriya Speaking tracts under one Administration. Tracing the glorious history of Orissa, he said "The present day Orissa inherits the culture of three ancient provinces: one is of Kalinga, another of Utkala and the third Udra. The present colossal art of Orissa, which is a distinctive type of Aryan art is the remnant of the development of ancient Kalinga art and may be found even now in original in the cave temples of Orissa. The sea-faring habits and navigation of Kalinga as also the name Bijaya Singh are well known in Indian History. He himself is claimed by four provinces, i.e. Orissa, Bengal, Gujurat and Burma. But it is a certain fact that his wife who accompanied him to Ceylon and colonised and spread civilisation in that land

belonged to Kalinga. The local name of the present Pegu is Ossa, which is a corruption of Orissa and some temples in Burma were constructed after the pattern of the cave temples of Udayagiri in Orissa.

The present temple of Jagannath is a gift of the Udras and the present Orissan culture may well be proud of that temple where the system of casteism or untouchability is not practised. The culture is purely Orissan. Orissa has kept it up; but that Orissa is not recognised to be a distinct individual feature in the Indian federation of races is deplorable and has to be combated.

Of Utkala, I shoud not say and tire the patience of this House. Thus, it stands out as a fact that we in Orissa, from ancient times developed a distinct and individual culture of our own ....

Orissa was always a separate province in history. The extent of Orissa which is now claimed to be from Midnapore to the southern point of Ganjam and from the shores of the Bay of Bengal to somewhere beyond Singhbhum and in the Eastern Central Provinces is not a recent discovery. Even during the palmy days of Bahamani, Vijayanagram and Bengal, our kings kept up their independence. Throughout the Mughal rule, it remained separate.

times before the battle of Plassey, it was made a part of Bengal......Then it was made a part of the Central provinces. During the second Mahratta war, it was again thrown to Bengal and what happened ? The famous historian Sri W. N. Hunter in his statistical documents has admitted how the British Govt. was responsible for the poverty and famine of our ancient land. The last of such cruel and heinous experiments was made in putting us with Bihar......we were told that this was necessary to provide a Seaboard to Bihar.. ... ... Sir, we should like to be a separate province as Assam or the Central Provinces.

It is quite natural that we should like to have a separate province of our own , as we have been having throught the course of history but for about these 200 years when on account of the foul play of the Imperial Govt., we have been thrown about from province like a football and we have been vivisected and thrown out portion by portion here and there".

Pandit Nilakantha did not fight for a sub-province; he had the foresight to demand a province with a separate University and a High Court x x x"

Propaganda in Outlying Areas

Pandit Nilakantha did not remain content with moving only a resolution in the Central Assembly. He tried his best to put up the mass demand by creating public opinion through organising public meeting in and outside Orissa in the outlying areas. Pt. Das toured the whole of Singbhum and Midnapur Districts with Sri Sashi Bhusan Rath of Berhampur and collected the geneological accounts of the Raj families at Saraikala and Kharasuan and organised meetings in these areas as well. His efforts to win over Sri Biren Sasmal of Midnapur even by offerin the Chairmanship of the proposed Puri Session of All India Congress, failed. Sri Subhas Chandra Bose also made all his efforts continuously and systematically to keep the area in Bengal.

Demand in the A.I.C C. Session

Besides moving a resolution in the Central Legislature for the formation of a separate Orissa Province, Pt. Nilakantha took it up in the meeting of the Indian National Congress. Motilal Nehru, President of the Congress Session at Calcutta argeed to the proposal for the creation of a separate province for Orissa provided that the financial

resources make it feasible. Sri Niranjan Patnaik, on the advice of Pandit Nilakantha put up an amendment before the All Party Subjects Committee that this would be economically viable provided our outlying areas, potentially rich in minerals and forest resources are amalgamated. Motilal Nehru as Chairman of session refused permission to discuss it. Pandit Nilakantha left the session along with all the delegates from the Orissa and led a procession in the Calcutta Streets the next day. Amity was, however, restored with the intervention of Gandhiji, who told Nilakantha that the proposal of the formation of Provinces on Linguistic basis in the country had long been accepted by the Congress and he would see that Orissa became the first province formed on the basis of this principle. Again when Nilakantha met Gandhiji with 39 Congress Members at Karachi after the session in 1931 Gandhiji agreed to put up the issue himself at the Round Table Conference, London, where Nilakantha was not required to accompany him being very ill at the time after release from jail.

Simon Commission

Govt. of India appointed O' Donell Committee to consider the creation of a separate province. Pandit Nilakantha was the President of the Committee selected by the Utkal Provincial Congress

and also of the Party Committee formed by both - Congress and non-Congress organisations representing all shades of openion. Nilakantha prepared two lengthy Memoranda and submitted them to the Committee. But as the Indian National Congress decided not to cooperate with Govt. in view of the prevalent Political climate after the second Round Table Conference, Dr. Rajendra Prasad as the Zonal Head of the Congress ordered Nilakantha to boycott the Commission. Nilakantha could not appear before the Simon Commission even though he went upto Jameshedpur with his Memoranda. Incidentally, it may be pointed out that Dr. Rajendra Prasad like other leaders from Bihar was also unhappy with Nilakantha due to his demand for merger of Singhumbhum in Orissa. O' Donnel Committee favoured creation of a separate province which would not include Parlakhemundi and Jeypore Zamindaries (in Madras), Singhbhum (Bihar) and Midnapore (in Bengal). Their recommendation did not satisfy the aspirations of the Oriyas. The Maharaja of Parlakemundi led a delegation of non-congress prominent public men to Lord Willingdon, the Viceroy at Simala in 1932 when Nilakantha was in jail. As a result, Lord Willingdon sent a favorable report to the Secretary of State in London who constituted the Attlee Parliamentary Sub-committee to reconsider the boundary of Orissa.

Nilakantha's Other Efforts— All Party Conference : Nilakantha Rejects "Knight Hood".

Mr. M S. Das and Maharaja of Parlakhemundi organised an all Party Conference at Cuttack to present the Orissa's cause forcefully before the Committee. Madhusudan advised that unless Pt. Nilakantha joined them they may not be able to achieve the goal. They invited Pandit Nilakantha who presided over and contributed to the success of the conference. On the basis of the recommendations of the Committee, a major portion of Parlakemundi and Jeypore Zamindaries were merged into the proposed Orissa Province,

Dr. S. N. Rajguru, the renowned Archeologist opines that Pandit Nilakantha could have matched Sri Sasmal, the Congress leader of Midnapore and Dr. Rajendra Prasad and other leaders from Bengal and Bihar and achieved the merger of Midnapore and Singhabhum areas in Orissa, But as the choice was between espousal of the Oriya cause against the dictates of Indian National Congress and fighting for the freedom of the country, Pandit Nilakantha had to reluctantly make the necessary sacrifice in the greater interest at the final stage. The reports of O' Donell Committee and Attlee Committee were then finalised and Nilakantha's dream of a separate province of Orissa, although truncated. was

fulfilled on 1st April, 1936 with the six districts of Cuttack, Puri, Balasore, Sambalpur, Ganjam and Koraput in it.

Nilakantha moved the British Councillor with various Memoranda and supplementaries. At one stage. Pandit Nilakantha was offered a "Knight-hood" if he would agree to the sub-prvoince instead of a province. Nilakantha refused the offer point blank with strong words to the English Councillor, "Mr. Hudson, you have come to a wrong door" Mr. Hudson felt offended and went back straight. After a lot of persuasion particularly by Sri Bhubanananda Das, another M.L.A. (Central) from Orissa, Nilakantha agreed to the creation of a separate province with some Oriya-speaking areas still remaining outside and with the understanding that the merger of these areas will be considered later.

Professor Ranga Describes Pt. Nilakantha as the Veritable Father of Orissa

Prof. N. G. Ranga, M.P., the Deputy Leader of Congress (I) Party in Lok Sabha and a Member of the Central Legislative Assembly along with Nilakantha for some time, has commented on Nilakantha, as "the veritable father of Orissa". Some extracts of his lecture at Rourkela on 11.4.87

is worth mentioning. He said "Nilakantha, the Great Lover of Oriya Language and connoissuer of strands of cultural heritage of Orissa's people raised the cause of Oriya masses to the level of political demand for the separate State in the same way as Bengal. He demanded through his many moves, resolutions and speeches in the Central Assembly and representations to British Statesmen and Parliament for the formation of a separate State for the whole of Orissa. He went beyond the usual Congress political meliew and befriended the Rajahs and Maharajas whose domains, were treated as Zamindaries or **so-called** Indian States, in order to gain maximum support ´for the demand for a separate statehood for Oriya people Many objections like inadequate financial resources needed to maintain a High Court, a separate University were raised. The poor economic condition, predominantly tribal liabilities in social and economic terms and undeveloped social communication between Sections of the Oriya people spread over too many provinces and States were raised by the British and Pandit Nilakantha turned all these into additional arguements in favour of separate statehood with the reunion of all Oriya speaking people, which would better help them to over-come all these and such other weakness and promote their progress on a par with the Bengalies and Biharies.

On several occasions, Nilakantha Das had to join issues with the powerful Chairman of the All Party Committee-cum-President of Indian National Congress, the great Motilalji, whenever his demand for a separate state of Orissa was not favoured. Once he had to lead a "Walk-out" and march in Calcutta protesting the action of the Congress Leaders. xxx He saw to it that their demand was strengthened in the Councils of the British, whether it be the O' Donell Commission, Round Table Conference of Central Govt. x x x and ensured success. While the Andhra Congressmen submitted to the Central Leadership and failed to pursue his tactics, Nilakantha helped the people of Orissa to achieve their statehood, more than a decade earlier. **Nilakantha thus became the veritable father of Orissa.**

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II. PANDIT NILAKANTHA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE LAST PHASE OF STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE

His real Motive and Action :

We have narrated some of the incidents regarding Pt. Nilakantha's contribution to the last struggle for independence in following the leadership of Sri Subhash Chandra Bose in 1939. It has also been said how and against what odds and even with what threat to his life he chose this arduous and dangerous path.

True, Subhasha's plan and contributions have made him immortal after his death in the war front. True it is also that Pt. Nilakantha was a born revolutionary and did not believe in the Gandhiji's non-cooperation method for achieving independence. It was therefore, natural for him to plunge into such an apparently dangerous struggle. Yet following such a path for a leader of his age speaks out not only his great courage and farsightedness, but his philosophical considerations with the consequences involved in chosing this, not only to him and to his party members, but to the younger Group led by his son Asok Das.

Leader of National war Front :

After the Coalition Ministry was formed, the Orissa Govt. founded an organisation named National War Front and Pt. Nilakantha was nominated its leader. The policy of the Coalition Govt. in helping the British in their war effort was explained in various meetings by Panditji who exhorted the Indian and Oriya Youths to join the war in large numbers and explained to the public that by doing so, the Indian Youths would not only learn the present warfare, but would assist the country's defence from foreign aggression in future.

Unfortunately, as has already been indicated earlier, in one of such meetings organised at Cuttack Town Hall, Panditji saw a banner "God Save the the King" hanging in the hall. He got extremely enraged and asked the organisers to immediately replace it by "God Save the Nation". The matter was reported to the Governor and Nilakantha's real motive was known. He was consequently removed from the Leadership of the War Front, even though the Ministry continued.

Endeavour To Keep Contact With Netaji In The War Front—

After the Ministry was formed and the Indian youth and soldiers were sent to the Eastern front to

help the Britishers in the war, Pt. Nilakantha and the group of Forward Block members tried to maintain contacts with Netaji in the War front. There was a Secret Central Office at Calcutta to organise this. In Orissa, this group was able to get the permission of the Govt. of India through Parla-kemundi Ministry to send Sri Dibakar Patnaik of Ganjam upto Burma Border to take care of the war-returned sick and disabled persons. The Governor of Orissa point blank remarked about Dibakar Patnaik as "Don't believe the fellow. He may be a good man at Bombay, but not in Orissa". Even then, Nilakantha had intervened earlier in his favour by making him the Working President of National War Front after him Besides. Sri Patnaik was also a prominent M. L. A. So permission could somehow be obtained. The Central Office at Calcutta had the Plan and the route map of the area where Netaji was staying. This could have enabled Sri Patnaik to go from Burma Border stealthily and meet Netaji. When Dibakar reached Howrah Station with Sri Sriharsa Mishra, who came down to take him from Berhampur, the C.I.D. Officers could get the scent and followed them from the Howrah Station. No sooner they reached Sriharsa's residence in an obsecure place and Patnaik went to the latrine with the route map to study it there,

the C.I.D. Officers reached the place. Knowing this, Sri Patnaik could chew up the entire route map in the latrine. However, Sri Patnaik was served with an externment order to go out of Bengal and Sriharsa was arrested. Further there was wide-spread search in Orissa. The Nababharat Press, where 'Life of Netaji' was being printed as also a lot of revolutionary literature were seized. The young activists including Panditji's son Ashok Das were arrested forthwith and imprisioned. Orders from Central Govt. was being passed to court marshal Ashok & shoot him.

Panditji was not down cast with this, but took it as a matter of course, consequential to such activities. The interesting part of it is that Pandit Nilakantha was not at Cuttack during the above search and on his return to Nababharat Press, where he was also staying, he found some of the young activists extremely sad and nervous. Nilakantha asked them as to what as the matter & on hearing from them about the search, he said, "Well, these are matters of course. It was anticipated that some of you will be arrested and jailed—the Press may be closed down and severe action on us may as well be taken—do'nt worry". He then advanced Rs. 20/- to them to purchase fish and have a happy dinner. It need be

mentioned here that Panditji was not only a voracious eater of fish, but it was his most lovable & delicious food.

Clement Atlee Clears the Roles of Netaji, INA & Subhashists

After the Second World War was over and it went in favour of the Allies, a glorious chapter of India's freedom movement led by Netaji Subhash that was by-passed by most of the historians came to lime light. Had the course of history been different, Netaji and his close associates in Orissa like Pt. Nilakantha, Pt. Godavarish and the youth leaders would not have got their due recognition. It has been indicated that the significance of struggle of the Indian National Army (INA) led by Netaji was acknowledged by no less a person than Clement Atlee, the then Prime Minister of England during whose regime India got independence. While in Calcutta in 1955, he told Sri Phani Bhusan Chakravarti, the then Governor of West Bengal that "the Raj left India hurriedly mainly because the loyalty of the Indian Army was suspected as was evident by the revolt of the INA and the Indian Army". He reportedly made it clear that "the impact of Gandhiji's tradional mass movement was 'minimum' on their crucial dicision to leave India".

It may be recalled that when a slander campaign was lunched against Pandit Nilakantha and Pandit Godavarish describing them as traitors and a young Congress Member in the Orissa Assembly made such a remark pointing at Pt. Godavarish, Pandit Nilakantha silenced the members of the Orissa Legislative Assembly with a forceful speech in defence on 4th. March, 1954. Besides naming Pt. Jawaharlal as a political traitor, Pt. Nilakantha continued, "In 1941, a coalition Ministry was formed in Orissa, with which was associated. Not a single person in it was a traitor. Nobody had sacrificed more for the country. The British were still our rulers at that time. We were their subjects, their slaves. Yet we accomplished more within the limits of our servitude than others did to free the country. We fought from the inside as well as from outside. It is for history to decide to what extent our actions can be described as that of traitors".

Panditji may rest assured in Heaven that the country records his contribution and that his words have been proved to be true, as is obvious from the above remarks of Gandhiji expressed through Jayaprakash Narayan and Clement Atlee.

What Pandit Nilakantha said in 1954 has now been corroborated in the controvertial last 30 pages

of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's book "India wins freedom" published in November, 1988. Sri Minu Masani in supporting Maulana Azad's opinion has issued a statement of Sri Jaya Prakash Narayan, who had been with Gandhiji then at Panchgam in 1946 and had written to him "Gandhiji was deeply perturbed over the rash statement of Jawaharlal, which he thought has dashed all hopes of settlement on the basis of indevided India (TIMES OF INDIA DATED 15-11-88).

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C. A RENOWNED PHILOSOPHER

Pt: Nilakantha's Philosophical Works

Panditji's success as a philosopher will perhaps be beyond description in this small book, being very intricate. Panditji wrote a few books on the Indian Philosophical out-look like (1) **Arya Jiban** (life of the Aryans) (2) **Sanskruta-O-Sanskruti** (Culture and Cultural Progress), (3) **Bhakti Gatha** (Religious prayers) etc. Later he brought out an addition of **Bhagabat Gita** with a very erudite and original introduction and **Oriya Sahityara Krama Parinama** in two volumes. He also wrote an original study of the developments of Oriya literature. It may be enough for us to know that Mahatmaji also wrote a commentary on **Bhagabat Gita** and sent the same for Panditji's comments while he was in Hazaribagh Jail. Panditji while returning the manuscript next day through Dr. Rajendra Prasad, another co-prisoner, has himself stated to have told him, "Tell Gandhiji that it is enough, he wrote on Gita. Let him not think of writing an annotation either on Upanishads or on "Brahmasutra" meaning thereby that they would not add to Gandhiji's image. He has further stated in his Autobiography, "In effect Gandhiji did not attempt to write any other commentry.

Panditji's Philosophical works were in Oriya, because he loved Orissa and its language and culture. Research on this is at the infant stage, when it is acclaimed that Pt. Nilakantha was one of the topmost Humanist philosophers of the country.

His Philosophical bent of mind from Childhood

Nilakantha had a philosophical bent of mind from his childhood. He would not do any thing that did not satisfy him from the stand point of reason. This may be evident from some of the incidents, which took place, when he was a child of five years old.

Once a bunch of ripe bananas meant for the village Goddess, Harachandi was hung in his house by his mother. Nilakantha took two of them. His mother who got Nilakantha, the only son at her age of 50, got terrified. Visualising the consequences of his work, Nilakantha querried his mother, "Well, you think Harachandi to be the mother of our village. Why then should you not think that she would be glad for this ? Consider that some sweets are kept for you. If I take some of them, will you be happy or curse me ?"

While a student, he was called Nilakantha "the Darsani" (Philosopher) while others were

called poets and like wise by some notable persons at Puri.

Dr. H. K. Mahtab has clarified that Nilakantha the born philosopher became a poet, because he was a patriot and felt that Orissa's ancient greatness and heritage was not made known to the public and therefore he wrote Kavya 'KONARKE' 'KHARAVELA' etc.

Panditji was also an authority on the cult of Lord Jagannath and not only wrote a small book on it had addressed many meetings on the subject.

Regarding his philosophy of life, Nilakantha wrote, "I admire Argument more than Emotion and I respect it".

In brief, it may be said that Panditji's attitude towards life & social cause for which he struggled althrough his life, can be traced to his philosophical bent of mind. Taking inspiration from the cultural heritage of India, he has been able to project himself as a Humanist Philosopher of very high status in the country, if not in the world, as some Professors opine.

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CHAPTER ~ V

CONCLUSION

Panditji's Achievement

To analyse Pt. Das's achievements, we may have a rapid look back to his life and deeds. We have come to know by now very well that the main aim of Pt. Nilakantha was to do something good for the country and to serve the country. With this end in view, he started taking up all social works like treating the patient, particularly the patients suffering from cholera that was rampant in those days, and burning the dead bodies of the poor in Cuttack town. He was althrough a good and well behaved scholar.

After passing his M.A. Examination from Calcutta University, he joined the Satyabadi Vana Vidyalaya, which he and Gopabandhu had started brick by brick & which was then upto M.E. Standard. He soon brought it up to High School Standard. This school attracted the attention of persons of all India repute, whereas it was at first suspected to be a centre hide-out by the Govt.

After $7\frac{1}{2}$ years at Satyabadi, Pt. Nilakantha joined as a Professor of Oriya-cum-Comarative philology in Calcutta University, at the invention of Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee, its Vice-Chancellor for atleast a period of 2 years, but he soon left the lucrative job only after $3\frac{1}{2}$ months, when Gandhiji's call for civil disobedience movement came.

He was elected to the Central Legislative Assembly as a Congress candidate and fought tooth and nail for the formation of the Orissa Province on linguistic basis and achieved it at the cost of getting decorated with the title "Knight hood" by the British Govt. and this was the first province to be created in the country on such basis. As a renowned Legislator, he fought for salt manufacture in Orissa Coast and its free Trade and this was before 10 years of Mahatma Gandhi's Dandi March. To his credit, Pt. Nilakantha, the General Secretary of the Party could manage to defeat the Govt. on many important matters like entry of communism to India, abolition of salt tax & Ban on the entry of Subhash Chandra Bose In India, even though the Congress Party was in minority in the Legislature.

In the second phase of his Political life, he joined the Forward Block with great foresight and could manage to form a coalition Ministry as per

direction of Sri Subhash Chandra Bose and exhorted the Oriya and Indian youths to join the Army in the War front in the guise of helping the Britishers and learn the present day war fare, which ultimately expedited parting with power to India by the Britishers. This was perhaps the greatest achievements in Panditji's life.

In the last part of his life, we have seen how Panditji joined the Congress at the personal request of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, and created a mumber of precedents in the annals of Parliamentary Democracy, as the Speaker of the Orissa Assembly.

Deathless Panditji -- a Renowned Writer :

As a literateur, we have seen Pandit Das's erudite scholarship as a writer of many books in a style known as Nilakantha Style and as an Editor of many newspapers and magazines, which have created many writers of repute. Commenting on one of his Kavyas; 'Konarke' written in the early part of his literary life. the celebrated poet of Orissa, Dr. Mayadhar Mansing remarked, "Nilakantha, the poet of Kavya 'KONARKE' is deathless." He has advocated various reasons in support of his views and stated that he has not come across such a kavya in so developed language like the Bengali language and

that he has read it over and over again, because it is so interesting".

His writing 'LABANYA BATI : TIKA-O-BYA-KSHYA' is a master piece as an Annotation on the Kavya of Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja of the Raj family written with the purpose of bringing the sweetness of the Oriya language that flourished in the 16th Century. Dr H. K. Mahtab, spoke very highly of it, while inaugurating the book a few years ago.

He further disclosed that another intention of Panditji's writing the Annotation was to show the greatness and piety of Kabi Samrat's Character expressed in this book at a time when acceptance of many wives as queens was the general customs in the Raj family. This he explained to Dr. Mahtab, a co-prisoner in the Hazaribagh Jail. This was acclaimed to be the specific character of Panditji also.

An Erudite Scholar

Some people use Pandit as heriditory title. They belong to a community or family of "Pandit" by birth. Nilakantha was a real Pandit from his childhood. We have seen the remarks of his village Primary school teacher. As a bright student, he got M. V. Scholarship. Again, he was awarded

Mayo scholarship from Ravanshaw College for pursuing Post Graduate Studies in Calcutta.

Godavarish was his colleague. But he revered Nilakantha as a Teacher, though he was senior to him in the class by only one year and in age by two years. Just before appearing in his B. A. (Hons.) Examination, Godavarish went to Nilakantha at Calcutta and told him that he had not read the book prescribed for Philosophy Honours and was hesitant to sit for the examination. Nilakantha told him not to lose heart and thus lose the year. He also said that he would read all these books at night and teach Godavarish the next day. This went on for six days and Godavarish appeared in the examination. After coming back from the examination hall, he used to relate to Nilakantha what he had written in every examination. In one case, after hearing what he wrote and being asked how much he would secure, Nilakantha told him that he would score 72 in that paper. Godavarish querried, "In that case, what will be the highest mark awarded in this paper ? "Nilakantha smiled and replied, "72". Later, it was however, found that Godavarish got 69 and secured the first position. The incident has been narrated by Pandit Godavarish in his autobiography showing how balanced Nilakantha was in judging a student's innate ability and performance.

Pandit Godavarish has further said that had Nilakantha Babu not helped him, he would be adding the title B. A. (Plucked) against his name. He has further added, 'Nilakantha Babu's memory is so strong that whatever he reads once, remains in his memory like a line on steel". His history of development of Oriya literature" (Oriya Sahitya Krama Parinama" in 2 volumes) was a pioneering scholarly work. **His Gita Bhasya** is a unique and rare writing of original scholarship

An Exceptional Leader

Pandit Nilakantha had a philosophical bent of mind from his childhood and would do only what he felt to be reasonable, correct and the best in the circumstance. He used to say, "I like to be a leader, but not to be led willyrilly by others". Many leaders, in order to gain cheap popularity, talk and do what people would like. Panditji was an exception.

It may be recalled that Pt. Nilakantha started his political career against the first advice of Pandit Gopabandhu, his mentor, to limit himself to educational activities at Satyabadi. Gopabandhu warned him, "Your father is old. He leaves in a village. So does your mother and wife. Who will look after them, if you join politics ? Who will feed

and look after your family ? It is not an easy matter to serve one's country and fight with the Britishers". Nilakantha took about 15 days time, secured a loan, purchased some more pieces of land and made arrangements for their cultivation so that the family could meet its minimum needs during his absence and plunged headlong into the Civil Disobedience Movement. Of course, the family had only a poor living. Later, when his wife Mrs. Radhamani Devi was arrested for leading a picketing in front of shops selling opium and foreign clothes etc., the family members left behind had a still difficult living

Few people have differed with Gandhiji openly and survived in Indian National Congress Subhash Chandra differed substantially with him. After defeating Gandhiji's candidate, Dr. Pattavi Sitaramaya in the Congress Presidential election Subhash had to face a lot of troubles. He could not even form his working Committee. We have seen how Pandit Nilakantha at the beginning of his political career differed with Mahatma Gandhi at Satyabadi with regard to the effectiveness of spinning as an instrument for winning Swarajya. Later, he also went against the dominant political wing of the Congress by joining hands with the "PROCHANGERS" known as Swaraj Party, which

disagreed with Gandhiji's NOCHANGER'S group. Yet Pt. Nilakantha received full support from Gandhiji in matters like formation of the Orissa State.

We may also see how inspite of many odds Pt. Nilakantha could stand out as an exceptional leader of great foresight and also in his advanced age took various daring and dangerous steps in the last phase of the struggle for India's Independence. He left the Congress Organisation at a crucial stage and was considered as a traitor. He had the guts to declare in the Congress dominated Orissa Assembly that not he, but the then Congress President and the Prime Minister of India, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru was a traitor in the political sense of the term, being responsible for the partition of India and creation of Pakistan. What Pandit Nilakantha said in 1954 has been proved to be true after the publication of the last 30 pages of Moulana Abul Kalam Azad's book "India wins freedom" in November 1988.

It is still a wonder that Nehruji in 1955 personally invited Panditji, "to come back to the Congress and help the great organisation with your wise counsel".

In fact, Pt Nilakantha had proved his name, given after Lord Balia Nilakantha to be true to

letters. But how far Panditji was successful to "see the country better before death" as per his vow of the student days after attainment of independence of India is every one's guess.

A Great Orator

His learning and wisdom were reflected not only in his teaching and writing, but also in his oratory, Pandit Godavarish writes that 'Pandit Nilakantha equals Utkal Gourab Madhusudan and Utkalmani Gopabandhu in oratory". He was a brilliant orator and language was no problem for him. He was an eloquent speaker in Oriya, Hindi, English and even in Sanskrit. In one of the gathe-rings, at Puri in his youth in 1934, he asked the President of the Bihar-Orissa Pandit Sammilani as to in which language he would like him to speak. Since he did not have any formal education in Sanskrit, one of the Pandits mischievously suggested to him to deliver in Sanskrit and Panditji spoke in Sanskrit for over 45 minutes. Being extremely astonished, Mahamahopadhyaya Sri Sadasiv Mishra commented, "I have never read or heard a lecture of this calibre". Another Mahamahopadhyaya Sri Jagannath Misra opined, there was not even a single Grammatical mistake. They embraced Nilakantha telling 'Nilakantha you are the pride, not only of Bihar and Orissa, but of whole of India.'

We have discussed a lot on him as an orator in various political meetings how he won over the people of Orissa, of whatever party he spoke or whatever cause he advocated.

A Great Man

A great man as he was, it was natural that he was rated very highly by his contemporaries. Pandit Nehru, the statesman wrote that "Nilakantha held a primary role both in the fields of literature and Politics in Orissa for over half a century". Dr. S. Radhakrishna, the educationist and Philosopher voiced the openion that Panditji had served Orissa in different roles for half a century. Dr. A. N. Khosla, Governor of Orissa stated, "Pandit Nilakantha was a multifaceted genius. He was a leading patriot, politician and literary figure, all rolled in one. In nutshell, he was a gem in the crown of Mother Orissa". Dr. H. K, Mahtab, the arch Political rival of Pandit Nilakantha and a stateman wrote, "Pandit Nilakantha was the most powerful personality in the field of Orissa Politics, Literature and culture at his time... ... ... It is a wonder that the personality of Pandit Nilakantha has not been as radiant in history as it should have been. But there is no doubt that it will be so one day or other."

One Of The Makers Of Modern India & Orissa—

Prof. S. Nurul Hasan, Education Minister, India has categorised Pandit Nilakantha Das as one of the makers of Modern India in the book "MAKERS OF MODERN INDIA" published by the Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi published in 1973, along with Pandit Gopabandhu Das from Orissa. The full text of the Statement is produced below—

Nilakantha Das—1884-1967.

Young Nilakantha Joined the famous Satyabadi School as a teacher in 1911 tforshaking several jobs. Later in 1921 he servedin Calcutta University as a Lecturer. He gave it up however to play a more important role during the Non-cooperation movement & suffered imprision-ment. He joined the Swaraj Party in 1923 & remained a member of the Central Legislative Assembly and Senior Secretary of the Swaraj Party, for over two decades. He was also elected the President of the Orissa Provincial Congress. He was successful in forming a coalition Govt. in Orissa in 1941. In independent India, Nilakantha became the leader of Independent Peoples Party. He was the Chairman of the University Committee whose recommendation led to the establishment of

the University. Later in 1955, he served as its Prochancellor. In 1957 he was elected the Speaker of the Orissa Legislative Assembly. A Politician, a social reformer, a scholar, a poet & an educationist, Nilakantha was also the Editor of 'Nababhart', "Samaj & Seva".

The Dictionary of National Biography, however, designates Pandit Nilakantha Das as one of the "Makers of Modern Orissa". (Vol. I, Page : 353).

A Great Patriot

Dr. David M. Brookman, a professor, Fort Hays State University, U. S. A. and an American Priest on reviewing his life and achievements, has recently remarked, "Pandit Nilakantha Das, though not as well known outside India, as were some of his contemporaries, nevertheless played a piovotal role in shaping modern India.

His deep seated Patriotism expressed itself in diverse ways. As an educator, he sought to cultivate citizens, who embraced the ideals of social reforms, philanthropy and love of learning. As a leader he envisaged the modern state of Orissa and worked tirelessly for its realisation as a political entity. Inextricably bound up with this achievement was the differentiation of Oriya as a separate language."

A Real Pandit

Panditji was of course awarded various titles and distinctions like Padma Bhusan, which Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of India confered on him at his residence as also the Kendriya Sahitya Academy prize at Bhubaneswar. Of course, Panditji attached no importance to them, as already stated. The title which struck to him like a shadow was PANDIT. Needless to add to that he was associated with all the great centres of learning in his time.

We have already stated in the Introductory chapter about the remarks of both Acharya Binova Bhabe, the Bhoodan leader and Utkalmani Gopabandhu on Nilakantha as a great Pandit.

The adjective 'Pandit' sums up the achievement of Nilakantha in nutshell. Pandit Godavarish, his learned colleague, Poet, Politician and educationist, stated that "Nilakantha Babu was a born Pandit". He further maintained that as far as his knowledge goes the only 'PANDIT' in Orissa was Pandit Nilakantha. None else was equal to him in learning. Comparing himself with Pandit Nilakantha we have seen how Godavarish was humble and gracious enough to express that he realised how small he was and was no match to Pandit Nilakantha

in learning even though he was also adorned with the same title 'Pandit' and that his face turned black on countless occasions whenever he discussed anything with Pandit Nilakantha.

Having considered elaborately the achievements of Pandit Nilakantha's life in all aspects, we would like to recollect the remarks of Prof. Ranga, where he says, "Many an eminent Oriya Leader has attained Chief Ministership, Governorship and Membership in the Central Cabinet, but Nilakantha stands as First among them all in service, scholarship, statemanship and compares favourably with the first rank of Leaders from all over India". And the remarks of Dr. Mahtab that Pandit Nilakantha was the most powerful personality in the fields of Orissa politics, literature and culture in his time. it is a wonder that the personality of Pandit Nilakantha has not been as radiant as it should have been. But there is no doubt, it will be done one day or the other".

A synopsis is enclosed at the end of the book indicating Nilakantha's (1) Writing, (2) Jail Life (3) Assembly Life (both Central and Orissa Assembly)

Bakula Banara Guru—

Before concluding some lines as sung by the famous Jatiya Kavi Bira Kishore Das, on the death

of his teacher, and published in the poetry book "BAKULA BANARA GURU" worth mention. This expresses the Indian belief that such noble Patriots who give their lives for the sake of the Country, go to Heaven after their death.

The Poet sings :-

ପଚାରଂତି ପିଲେ ସଭିଏଁ ଜୁଟି
"କାଲି କିଆଁ ସାର୍ ହୋଇଲା ଛୁଟି"

ନଥିଲା ପୁନିଅଁ ପରବ କିଛି
ଫେରିଗଲୁ ଦେଖି ତାଲା ପଡ଼ିଛି

ଶୁଣିଲୁ ଗାଆଁରେ ପଡ଼ିଚି କଥା
"କେଡ଼େ ପଂଡିତ ସେ କେଡ଼େ ତା' ମଥା"

(What a big Pandit and how big was his head : i.e., how many things were contained in his head ;)

କହଂତି ଗୁରୁଜୀ ମୁହଁ ଶୁଖାଇ,
"ଆମ ପତାକାକୁ ଦିଅ ଅନାଇ ।

ନୁଆଣିଆ ହୋଇ ଉଡ଼େ ପବନେ
କେତେ ପୂର୍ବକଥା ପଡ଼େ ତା' ମନେ ।"

The School teacher then went on narrating the achievements of Pandit Nilakantha from his

own experience and study from News Papers, during Panditji's life time and then on this sad demise, in the mouth of the banner as recollected by it. It details the large congregation of people of all ranks and files from the Chief Minister of the state, right upto the persons of low income group, from the illustrious learned upto the illiterate common mass, all paying their Foral tributes to their beloved Panditji. They then followed the bier in a procession that started with the full state honours through the awe-strickedn streets of the Cuttack Town, receiving ovations at various institutions. The Poet-banner is reminded of the occassions when the Police that was cordoning Panditji all around, during satyagraha movements, has now been marching with their guns down-wards At Bhubaneswar also the procession passed through the Utkal University, the institution of Panditji's creation, the Legislative Assembly building, that was inaugurated during his Speakership, receiving the Floral tributes from hundreds in the crowds in that wintry night and then followed the route as announced by the A I R. Cuttack along the Bhubaneswar-Puri road to receive the ovations of thousands on the way at different places and culminated at the Pancha Sakha Pitha, where the crowd including women and children swelled to about a lakh. He was laid to rest here, where from he went to turnover according to Hindu beliefs.

The National poet sings :—

ବସିବା ପାଇଁକି ବନ୍ଧୁ ସ୍ୱଜନ
ସଜା ହୋଇଥିଲା ଦିବ୍ୟ ଆସନ ।
ଫାଟକରେ ଲେଖା ଥିଲା 'ସ୍ୱାଗତଂ'
ଉଡ଼ୁଥିଲା ଜାତି–ପତାକା ଶତ ।
ଦଳ ଦଳ ହୋଇ ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛା ସେବକ
ଗ୍ରହିଁ ବସିଥିଲେ ବୀଣା ବାଦକ,
ଏପରି ସଜାକୁ ଶୋଭରେ ବଳି
ଉଠୁଥିଲା ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ଉଦିଆ ଜଳି ।
ନନ୍ଦନ କାନନୁ କୁସୁମ ତୋଳି
ରଖିଥିଲେ ବାସ ଚନ୍ଦନ ଗୋଳି ।
ପହଂଚତେ ଯାଇ କଂଠଂକ ରଥ
ଆସି ଗୋପବନ୍ଧୁ ଧଇଲେ ହାତ ।
ଗୋପ ଚଉଧୁରୀ ଜନତା–ମିତ,
ଉଭା ଲିଂଗରଜ ତାଂକ ସହିତ ।
ମଂଗରଜ ଦେଲେ ହାର ପିନ୍ଧାଇ
କୁଂତଳା, ଅପର୍ଣା ନେଲେ ବଂଦାଇ ।
କବି ବାଂଛାନିଧି ରଚିତ ଗୀତ
ଗାଇ ନିରଂଜନ ହରିଲେ ଚିତ୍ତ ।
କୃପାସିଂଧୁ ସାଥେ ଗୋଦାବରୀଶ
ପୁଛଂତି ସଭିଏଁ ହୋଇ ହରଷ ।
ଗ୍ଭଲିଚି କିପରି ଶାସନ କଳ
କମିଚି ନା ବଢ଼ି ଯାଉଚି ଦଳ

× × × ×

ପାଳୁଥିବେ ଲୋକେ ଗାଂଧିଂକ ନୀତି
ଯେ ନୀତିରେ ନେଲେ ଦେଶକୁ ଜିତି ।

ତହୁଁ ନୀଳକଂଠ ଅଳପ ହସି
ତେଜି ଦୀର୍ଘଶ୍ୱାସ କହିଲେ ବସି ।

"ପଗ୍ଭରିଲ ଯାହା କହିବି ପରେ
ଚିପି ରଖିଚି ମୁଁ ପ୍ରାଣ ଭିତରେ

ଆଣିଚି ଗୋଟାଏ ବଡ଼ ବାରତା
ହରିଭଇନାଂକ ମନର କଥା ।

ନ କରିବ ତାଂକୁ କେବେ ଅଲଗା
ତମ ପାଖେ ଖଂଡେ ରଖିବ ଜାଗା ।"

(Acharya Harihar had in fact, expressed his wish while shedding tears at Nilakantha's dead body.)

—X—

SYNOPSIS OF PT. NILAKANTHA'S WRITINGS, JAIL LIFE & ASSEMBLY LIFE.

NILAKANTHA'S WRITINGS

A. KAVYA

1.	Pranayini	1919
2.	Konarke	1919
3.	Kharvela	1920
4.	Dasanaik	1923
5.	Labanyabati with annotation, written in 1930, Published after his death.	1983

B. BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

1.	Pilanka Ramayana	1923
2.	Pilank Mohabharat	1924
3.	Pilanka Bhagabat	1925
4.	Pilanka Geeta	1935-'50

C. RELIGIOUS WORKS

Bhakti Gatha — 1918

D. PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS

Arya Jiban — 1921

Sreemad Bhagabat Gita
(1st Edition) 1936
(2nd enlarged Edition) 1952
(3rd Edition) 1961

E. CRITICAL WORKS

1. Sanskruta-O-Sanskruti 1951
2. Odiya Bhasha-O-Sahitya 1959

F. PHILOSOPHICAL CRITICAL WORKS

1. Odiya Sahityara Krama Parinama (1st. Volume) 1948
2. Odiya Sahityara Krama Parinama (2nd Volume) 1953

G. JIBANI SAHITYA

1 Atma Jibani (Auto-biography) 1963
(Received Kendriya Sahitya Akademi Award)

H. MAGAZINES AND NEWS PAPERS

1. Edited monthly Magazine SATYABADI from 1912 to 1917
2. Edited "SEVA" for 9 months. in 1921
3. Edited 'LOKAMATA' (weekly) from 1936-1940
4. Edited the monthly Magazine 'NABABHARAT' from 1934 to 1942 and then from 1946 to 1951.
5. Edited a daily News Paper 'NABABHARAT' from 1941 to 1946.

JAIL LIFE

1. From 7.2.1923 to 18.6.1923 in Hazaribagh Jail
2. From 10.6.193h0 to 22.12.1930 in Hajaribagh Jail.
3. From 19:1.1931 to 10.3.1931 in Puri Jail
4. From 16.1.1932 to 1.5.1933 in Hazaribagh Jail (Allthrough he was an 'A' Class Prisoner)

ASSEMBLY LIFE

A. CENTRAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY—

1. From 30.1.1924 to Nov. 1926
2. From 19.1.27 to 1.1.30 (Resigned as per the direction of the Congress.)
3. From 10.3.1930 to April 1930 (Resigned as per the direction of his Nationalist Party.)
4. From 21.1.1935 to Sept. 1945 the end of the Assembly term.

B. ORISSA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY—

1. Was elected as a Member SWADHIN JANA-SANGHA, the party formed by him, from 4.3.52 till end of the term, as 31.3.57.

Joined Congress on the invitation of Pt. Nehru.

2. Was declared elected uncontested as a Congress Candidate and became the Speaker of the Orissa Legislative Assembly on 27.5.57, Continued upto 1.7.61, 4 months after the Ministery had fallen, creating a new precedence in the history of Provincial Legislatures.

————

ପଣ୍ଡିତ ନୀଳକଂଠଂକୁ ଜାଣିବାକୁ ହେଲେ ପଢ଼ନ୍ତୁ

୧ । ନୀଳକଂଠ ସ୍ମାରକୀ– ୧ମ ଖଣ୍ଡ ... ସାଧା ସିଲଇ–ଟ ୨୦-୦୦
(ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ଲବ୍ଧ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠ ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ, ରାଜନୈତିକ
ନେତା ଓ ଦାର୍ଶନିକଙ୍କ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧାଞ୍ଜଳି ତଥା ନୀଳକଂଠଂକ
ରଚନାରୁ କେତେକାଂଶ ଦ୍ୱାରା ସଂବୃଦ୍ଧ) ବୋର୍ଡ ବନ୍ଧାଇ–ଟ ୨୫-୦୦

୨ । ନୀଳକଂଠ ସ୍ମାରକୀ– ୨ୟ ଖଣ୍ଡ ... ସାଧା ସିଲଇ–ଟ ୩୦-୦୦
(ବହୁ ଲବ୍ଧ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠ ସାହିତ୍ୟିକ, ରାଜନୈତିକ ନେତା, ଦାର୍ଶନିକମାନଙ୍କ ଲେଖା,
ନୀଳକଂଠଂକ ରଚନାରୁ କେତେକାଂଶ ତଥା ମନୀଷୀଙ୍କ ଶତବାର୍ଷିକୀ ଉପଲକ୍ଷେ
ଜ୍ୟୋତି ପରିକ୍ରମାର ବିବରଣୀ ପ୍ରଭୃତି ସହ) ବୋର୍ଡ ବନ୍ଧାଇ–ଟ ୩୬-୦୦

୩ । ନୀଳକଂଠ ସ୍ମାରକୀ– ୩ୟ ଖଣ୍ଡ ... ସାଧା ସିଲଇ–ଟ ୧୪-୦୦
(ନୀଳକଂଠଂକ ଭାଷାବିଗ୍ରହ ଏବଂ ରାଷ୍ଟ୍ରୀୟ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥାପକ ନୀଳକଂଠ) ବୋର୍ଡ ବନ୍ଧାଇ-ଟ୧୮-୦୦

୪ । ନୀଳକଂଠ ସ୍ମାରକୀ– ୪ର୍ଥ ଖଣ୍ଡ ସାଧା ସିଲଇ-ଟ ୧୮-୦୦
(ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଶିଶୁସାହିତ୍ୟ ଓ ପଣ୍ଡିତ ନୀଳକଂଠ
ଏବଂ ପଣ୍ଡିତ ନୀଳକଂଠଂକ ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ ଚେତନା) ବୋର୍ଡ ବନ୍ଧାଇ– ଟ ୨୨-୦୦

୫ । ନୀଳକଂଠ ସ୍ମାରକୀ– ୫ମ ଖଣ୍ଡ ... ସାଧା ସିଲଇ–ଟ ୧୬-୦୦
(ଦାର୍ଶନିକ ନୀଳକଂଠ) ବୋର୍ଡ ବନ୍ଧାଇ–ଟ ୨୦-୦୦

୬ । ମନୀଷୀ ନୀଳକଂଠ–ଅଧ୍ୟାପକ ଚିନ୍ତାମଣି ଦାଶ...ସାଧା ସିଲଇ–ଟ ୩୦-୦୦
ବୋର୍ଡ ବନ୍ଧାଇ–ଟ ୩୬-୦୦

୭ । ନରସିଂହ ମହାପାତ୍ରଙ୍କ ମନୀଷୀ ନୀଳକଂଠ...ସାଧାରଣ ସଂସ୍କରଣ–ଟ୧୦-୦୦
ସୁଲଭ ସଂସ୍କରଣ ଟ ୭-୦୦

୮ । ପଣ୍ଡିତ ନୀଳକଂଠ : ଜୀବନୀ ଓ କୃତି ... ସୁଲଭ ସଂସ୍କରଣ–ଟ ୨୦-୦୦
ଶୋଭନ ସଂସ୍କରଣ ଟ ୩୦-୦୦

୯ । Pandit Nilakantha Das Delux Edition Rs.80.00
Lila Ray Ordinary Rs. 50.00

୧୦ । ବକୁଳ ବନର ଗୁରୁ–ଜାତୀୟ କବି ବୀର କିଶୋର ... ଟ ୩-୦୦

୧୧ । Utkala Guru Pandit Nilakantha Delux Rs. 15.00
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ପ୍ରାପ୍ତିସ୍ଥାନ– ପଣ୍ଡିତ ନୀଳକଂଠ ସ୍ମୃତି ସମିତି

୩୦୩, ଖାରବେଳ ନଗର, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର–୧

ଏତଦ୍ ବ୍ୟତୀତ ପଣ୍ଡିତ ନୀଳକଂଠଂକ ନିଜ ଲିଖିତ ଓ ତାଙ୍କ କନ୍ୟାଙ୍କ ଦ୍ୱାରା ସଂପ୍ରତି ପ୍ରକାଶିତ ୪୦୦ ପୃଷ୍ଠାରୁ ଊର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ "ଲାବଣ୍ୟବତୀ ଟୀକା ଓ ବ୍ୟାଖ୍ୟା" ସଦୃଶ ବନ୍ଧାଇ ପୁସ୍ତକ ଏଠାରେ ମିଳେ– ଦାମ୍ ଟ ୬୦ ଙ୍କା କମିଶନ (ସାଧାରଣତଃ) ୧୫%

ACHIEVEMENTS OF PT. NILAKANTHA SMRUTI SAMITI

1. A decade after the death of Panditji to perpetuate his memory. A Samiti styled as Pandit Nilakantha Smruti Samiti was established at Bhubaneswar headed by one of the renowned economist of Orissa and a student of Satyabadi, Dr. Sadasiva Mishra. It was Registered under the Govt. in 1978.

2. The Samiti has to its credit got the erstwhile and present Governors, Chief Ministers, some of the Cabinet Ministers and other famous personalities of the State involved with it in various capacities.

3. It has by now, worked out schemes like creation of Endowments for doing Research on Panditji's literary, political and philosophical achievements & instituting Pt. Nilankantha memorial Lectures, through Utkal University. Essay, Debate and Recitation Competitions at the University and High Schools in district level; Awards through Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bhubaneswar, Viswa Bharati, Santi Niketan. Publication on Panditji's life and achievements (10 Vols) providing aids to a Library and information Science College at Bhubaneswar, named after him and holding of seminars on various subjects in which Panditji has excelled, such as Oriya Literature, Indian Politics and above all his philosophical out look.

4. On the occasion of Panditji's Birth Centenary, a flame was brought out from his village home and kept burning or about 2 years and was carried to almost all the districts in the State, to over 100 schools, colleges and cultural institutions, where various functions were held, students and the public were addressed by eminent persons of Orissa on his aims of life and achievements and prizes distributed to winners of Essay and Debate competitions. The closing functions were attended by the Governor and the Chief Minister of Orissa as Chief Guests after which the flame was extinguised and ashes thrown in to the Bay of Bengal at Puri.

5. The last but not the least important is the display of the Dance Drama on Panditji's small poem "JAGANNATHA DAHIKHIA' and his famous Kavya 'MAYA DEVI' through the Cuttack T.V. Centre to popularise his works.

6. Pandit Nilakantha's statue have been erected at Calcutta and Sakhigopal through the efforts of the Samiti and are scheduled to be erected at Bhubaneswar, Puri and Cuttack soon.